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Reformed Spirituality in Java:

**The Reformed Tradition and the Struggle of the GKJ
to Actualize Its Reformed Spirituality in Indonesia**

Simon Rachmadi

VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT

**REFORMED SPIRITUALITY IN JAVA: THE REFORMED TRADITION AND THE
STRUGGLE OF THE GKJ TO ACTUALIZE ITS REFORMED SPIRITUALITY IN
INDONESIA**

ACADEMISCH PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad Doctor aan
de Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam,
op gezag van de rector magnificus
prof.dr. V. Subramaniam,
in het openbaar te verdedigen
ten overstaan van de promotiecommissie
van de Faculteit der Godgeleerdheid
op maandag 27 maart 2017 om 11.45 uur
in de aula van de universiteit,
De Boelelaan 1105

door

Simon Rachmadi

geboren te Yogyakarta

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 prof.dr. J.S. Aritonang

Ecclesia reformata semper reformanda

The historical past is of importance, yet the future is imperative and the present moment is of significance. They are the breath of our spirituality, following the journey of the incarnated Christ in the world.

Manungsa kurang tata iku dumadine buta

Humanity without order is the beginning of inhumanity (or chaos)

(A Javanese proverb)

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Introduction

The Problem

Christians believe to live in the expectation of the Kingdom of God. They are expected to interpret their life according to the rules of this kingdom. That means that they are always involved in a process of interpretation. We call that process a hermeneutical process. They are looking for the hermeneutical keys to interpret their lives in the light of the Kingdom of God. So, their existence is a hermeneutical existence. Their hermeneutical principles are the guidelines for their daily Christian praxis and define their spirituality. Without this spirituality no Christian life is possible. They try to sense where the divine presence in their lives could be. Without this spiritual sense of divine presence, the human existence cannot give a meaningful interpretation to the facts of life *coram deo*, interpreted in the belief of the presence of a loving God. Accordingly, it would otherwise lose its sense of mission, of calling, and of purpose in life, as it would be blind to the value of divine presence in our actual realities. Without the spiritual sense of divine presence, so to speak, human existence would lose its ground for an authentic spirituality which is the source of the human capacity to be existentially responsible. Likewise, without the spiritual sense of the divine presence in the world, human life would be blind to any value anchored in the redemptive love of God.

What holds true for the individual believer holds also true for a community of believers like a Christian church. It has also the task to interpret its life *coram deo*. In Indonesia, there is, among many other protestant churches with European roots, a Christian denomination with the name of the GKJ, i.e. the Gereja-gereja Kristen Jawa, which means: the Christian Churches of Java. In this study I concentrate especially upon this church because it is the church I myself belong to. So, there is an existential need for me to be concerned about the way my church articulates its own spirituality. The members of this church are mostly Javanese people, spreading from the rural villages to the urban areas of the island of Java. For years, this church has been dealing with a pastoral approach that might be called theological contextualization. The purpose of the contextualization is to have a Christian church being adapted to the world of the Javanese people both theologically, culturally and historically. Its history has been coloured by the Dutch colonial period. In this period the Dutch missionaries brought their own Reformed spirituality to Java. It became our spirituality as well. In the postcolonial period, however, we felt the urgency to integrate this Reformed spirituality with our own, historical Javanese spirituality. We call this process a process of contextualization. Often, however, has been neglected that this process is primarily a pastoral process. How can these two worlds, the world of the Reformed and the Javanese spirituality be integrated? This pastoral approach is successful, as the church has been able to survive with dignity in the postcolonial era.

Even so, in the face of current globalization, a new urgent question arises: if the GKJ has been contextualized in the Javanese world with its own forms of spirituality which recently receive a more positive reception, also among Christians, how can it trace its roots in the world of Christianity and in how far can it continue its contextualized existence authentically in the (Western) Christian tradition of spirituality? In other words: can there be any space in Reformed spirituality for Javanese spirituality as well? Or, articulated the other way around: can there be any space in Javanese spirituality for Reformed spirituality as well?

Research Questions

During the 19th century the GKJ has been installed in Java by the Dutch Reformed mission (i.e. the Gereformeerde Zending), which was strongly influenced by Calvin's theology and later Calvinistic ideas. This Western theological structure has been predominant within the GKJ for many decades. Therefore, a fundamental question that we have to deal with is: In order to discuss its present Christian spirituality, we have—on the one hand—to investigate the Reformed tradition of the GKJ as it is grounded in its historical roots and—on the other hand—we have to locate the Reformed tradition of the GKJ in its contemporary struggle for theological contextualization in the postcolonial and rapidly changing society of Indonesia. How do we combine these two intentions?

My research question is twofold:

1. What are the main characteristics of Reformed spirituality (earlier often defined as piety), specifically in the Calvinistic tradition of the (former) Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, the GKN)?
2. In which sense does the current GKJ in its doctrinal statement called PPAG (*Pokok-pokok Ajaran Gereja*, the Main Principles of Teaching or Doctrine of the GKJ) reveal a particular kind of Reformed spirituality which has arisen and developed in Java?

The answers to these two questions will bring us in the center of a vehement, current missiological debate. What does it mean that the Western mission agencies founded so many Anglican, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist and Roman Catholic churches in the Non-Western world? Do these churches really have an Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist or Roman Catholic profile? Do they still have an outspoken profile determined by the history of confessional controversies in the West from the sixteenth century onwards? Or does the political liberation from their colonial powers also imply a theological liberation from the confessional constraints of their mission past? This is an intriguing question with which many of the current Christian World Communions nowadays seriously struggle. Especially the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) is a case in point. Two-thirds of its member churches are from Asia and Africa. What does 'Reformed' still mean in this circle?

This study can be considered as a case study. It illustrates the above-mentioned questions by focusing on one church with a rich Reformed history at an island with an equally rich political, cultural and religious history. What will become the outcome of this synthesis?

As historical background of the spirituality of the GKJ, we decided to concentrate upon the Reformed spirituality in the GKN during the nineteenth and twentieth century. That was the time of their most intense mission activities in Java. To describe their spirituality we had, of course, also to explore their roots. Therefore we begin with a description of Calvin's spirituality. His spirituality has, of course, also its own roots, but only very briefly we will deal with them, just giving a sketch of a few significant developments.

Methodology

A narrative is constructed not only by affirmative facts of the past but also by the narrator's own experiential perspectives. In this sense, the objectivity of a narrative should be considered by evaluating the quality of the dialogue between the affirmative facts of the past

and the narrator's own experiential perspectives. By doing so, the study of a narrative will be a hermeneutical enterprise of a living story which creates a mutual connection between the past and current experiences.

Our study which is based upon both Western and Indonesian literature, including Indonesian church documents, is about the narrative of the GKJ, i.e. the Gereja-gereja Kristen Jawa or the Javanese Christian Churches, a Protestant denomination in Indonesia, which has its origins in the Gereformeerde Zending of the nineteenth and twentieth century. For our study about this denomination, the above perspective about the narrative entails an analytical study about the spirituality of the GKN which has become the background of the Gereja-gereja Kristen Jawa. The narrative of the GKN as it has grown in the soil of Western Europe was integrated into current Javanese experiences when it came to the island of Java and became the current GKJ. These narratives reveal how the history of the GKJ could become a story about spiritual discernment for a hermeneutics of thankfulness and responsibility, dealing with current experiences and challenges. We hope that this study can be one the building blocs for such a hermeneutics.

To this purpose, we will mainly use material from a relatively new field of theological study, that is, the academic discourse on Christian spirituality. We will try to provide a birds-eye view of the hermeneutical-historical nature of the discourse on spirituality as implemented within the GKJ. In order to do so, we have to explore both the Calvinistic spirituality and the historical background of the GKJ. Quotations from Javanese, Indonesian and Dutch language documents have been translated by me. At the Dutch Reformed church and at the Javanese side there is a huge pile of fascinating documents, resource publications, etc. Hence, our focus is on written materials and the method of this study can, therefore, be characterized as literature study.

In principle, this study is a systematic study, focused on the evolution of the content of Reformed doctrines in a mission context. In its plea for a new, contextual articulation of a Javanese, Reformed spirituality, there is also an obvious overlap with a number of issues out of the field of church history and practical theology. This combination might be labelled as one of the main features of current missiological approaches in which systematic, historical, practical and contextual aspects usually are inextricably intertwined.

Composition of This Study

In this dissertation, we will go into a discussion about the idea of Reformed spirituality as the praxis of a hermeneutics of thankfulness and responsibility. In essence, it is a spirituality of divine grace. Firstly, we will try to formulate a more extended form of this brief, provisional definition of Reformed spirituality; and by doing so we will construct a horizon of thought that can develop the task of reforming the church in relation to the task of mission. The task of reforming the church entails the responsibility of cultivating a faith which manifests the global face of Christianity, but which also intends to create the opportunity of mutual encounter with the spiritual heritage of a native people living in a particular context, in order to create an effective structure of the church. Secondly, we will discuss four theological themes that might illustrate the contours of Reformed spirituality: namely, a theology of the church, of the sacraments, of the ministry, and of the piety or Christian life. After that, thirdly, we shall go into details about the historical background of the existence of Reformed Christianity in Java, both among the Javanese and the Dutch people who struggled to be responsible Christians in their time. Finally, we are going to discuss the historical existence

of the modern GKJ, pointing to the times from its first synod in 1931 to its official detachment from the Heidelberg Catechism as it adopted a new catechism called the PPAG (Pokok-pokok Ajaran Gereja, the Main Principles of Teaching or Doctrine of the GKJ), which is still wrestling with the problem of being responsible Christians in current Indonesia.

Significance

We believe that our research questions can stimulate an academic discussion about the significance of Reformed spirituality in the field of Indonesian theology and in broader Non-Western contexts as well. What was too Western and can be dropped off without losing the main characteristics of this kind of spirituality? Spirituality is not only about prayer formulas or psychological introspection, but also about a critical analysis of all the complexities of a historical church. This would stimulate the use of reason, enlightening the historically driven forces that create human, social and psychological conditions as well as their religious orientation. This kind of discussion could form the grounds for placing the idea of spirituality into the worldwide missiological discourse about the relation of the Western mother churches and the non-Western daughter- or sister churches. Is the current relation just still a sponsor relation or will it become more and more a reciprocal relation of the encounter of two spiritualities with partly the same roots?

Chapter 1

Toward a Definition of Reformed Spirituality

Beyond Calvinism

Most definitions of Reformed Christianity are colored by Protestant denominationalism pointing to Calvinism—or what one might call a social-reconstructive approach of Protestantism—often articulated in contrast to both Anabaptism and Lutheranism. Calvinists are inclined to see the reign of Christ over His people as always both embedded historically in the temporal order of human civilization and represented directly by the Holy Spirit. Calvinists declare affirmatively that they will not create a new church as they maintain their commitment to the one and holy church which is anchored in the historical moment of Christ in a human society that continuously grows into perfection through the ages. They are people of the Word of God, who confess their faith publicly and work out Christian morality faithfully for the creation of a just social order, as they believe that the Kingdom of Christ is always to be manifested in the historical struggle for human sanctification and for the process of reforming the church. So to speak, the Calvinists believe that they are the significant people of the Reformation so that they might be called the Reformed people. This kind of sentiment, eventually, becomes a technical matter to designate the idea of Calvinism into what is called Reformed Christianity.

The issue of reforming the church, in reality, has a much more diverse context. The church historian Bernard Reardon has argued that the Reformation came from a long historical struggle for reforming the church (Reardon 1981, 1-26). The Reformation had many forerunners. We point just to a couple, in our eyes significant events and figures. The background of the sixteenth-century Reformation could be traced to at least two centuries earlier, when the Roman Catholic Church suffered painful conflicts with the secular authorities. Occasioned by his quarrel with Philip IV of France, in the bull *Unam Sanctam* of 1302, Pope Boniface VIII has announced the harsh ecclesiastical argument “extra ecclesiam nulla salus” declaring affirmatively that outside the Catholic Church there is neither salvation nor remission of sins (Reardon 1981, 2). However, reacting to the bull, the powerful French king put the pope under his control in Avignon which led to a dual papal throne: the one of Rome and the other of Avignon. This dualism culminated in the Western Schism, 1378-1417, as the successors of both parties claimed their right to the chair of Saint Peter. The rivalry was eventually solved by a joint venture of the two contending parties in the council of Constance, 1414-1418. In this council, the unity among the Roman Catholic Church was re-established, and the papal supremacy was re-enacted (Ozment 1980, 164-172).

The way that the Council of Constance has chosen to re-establish the papal supremacy, was by de-legitimizing the two doctrines that were in opposition to the ecclesiastical teaching about supremacy of the papal church. The two doctrines were founded by William of Ockham (1287 – 1347) and Marsiglio of Padua (c. 1275 – c.1342), whose opinions were seen by the worldly authorities as a deconstruction of the Roman Catholic Church. The first scholar, a Franciscan friar teaching at Oxford, was a theologian who had argued that the secular power has legitimate power over the spiritual authority of the church. Ockham became involved in a serious dispute with pope John XXII at Avignon, so that he applied for protection from the pope’s opponent: Louis of Bavaria (the elected candidate for the Holy Roman Empire), under whose protection he remained for the rest of his life. It was during these latter years that he protested bitterly against the pope in favour of the imperial authority

and its policies, arguing not only that the pope had no right to determine the validity of an imperial election but, on the contrary, that the emperor had a positive duty to depose a heretical pope, as he himself deemed John XXII in fact to be (Reardon 1981, 2).

The second scholar, Marsiglio, who also became a protégé of the pope's opponent Louis of Bavaria, was a theologian who held the opinion that the legitimate power of a monarch is always from the people. He is best known as the author (in collaboration with John of Jandun) of the famous treatise *Defensor Pacis*, Defender of the Peace (1324). In this work, in which the influence of Aristotle's Politics is evident, he maintains that the state, which derives its authority from the people themselves—who retain the right to censure and even overthrow the ruler—is the great unifying power in society, and to it as such the church, which has no intrinsic jurisdiction temporal or spiritual, must be wholly subordinate (Reardon 1981, 3).

Before achieving influence on the Reformation, the teachings of the two critical thinkers had influenced the fourteenth-century English theologian and scholar-statesman John Wycliffe (c. 1330-84) who argued that the source of legitimacy for any power in the world can only be found in the authority of the Bible. His biblical and patristic interests also led him to rethink the doctrine of the church as such, and although his distinction between the ideal of an 'invisible' society, which, like Augustine, he identified with the totality of the elect, and the visible, historic institution, to which he ascribed no authority that did not derive from the former, was by no means novel. It was one which, in the conditions of the age, could only detract further from the spiritual standing of the ecclesiastical order. At first, in his treatise 'On Civil Dominion' (*De civili dominio*, published in 1375-6) he argued that all authority, whether ecclesiastical or secular, depended on the grace of God, and that bishops or priests who manifestly ceased to be in a state of grace could be lawfully deprived by the civil power. Then, in three more writings—'On the Church' (*De Ecclesia*), 'On the truth of sacred scripture' (*De veritate sacrae scripturae*) and 'On the power of the pope' (*De potestate papae*, published in 1377-8)—he insisted that the Bible is the only valid criterion of doctrine to which ecclesiastical tradition may add nothing, and that papalism has no real basis in scripture (Reardon 1981, 4).

In the fifteenth century, after years of quarrel and contention, eventually, the Council of Constance declared that the two doctrines are mistaken. The council affirmatively stated that, in order to interpret the Bible correctly, and to create a just social order in accordance to the Word of God, people will always need spiritual guidance from the one, holy, and apostolic church.

Unfortunately, despite its successfully reclaiming the unity of the Church, the Council of Constance created a tragedy. When the council decided that William Ockham was a heretic, the Ockhamists were framed to be the major enemy of the Holy Roman Empire. Among the Ockhamists, the figure of Jan Hus (c. 1369 – 1415) was the most prominent, as he was present in the council to defend the doctrines of Ockham publicly. He was then arrested as a dangerous heretic and was put to the painful death by fire.

The tragedy of Jan Hus in the Council of Constance reveals several contending historical layers that may have prepared the way for the sixteenth-century Reformation. These contending layers were the growing sentiments of anti-papalism, heresy, conciliarism, popular piety, and humanism (Reardon 1981, 1-26). The first sentiment grew among people who mostly were of the same opinion as the emperor who claimed his independence from papal supervision. The second sentiment grew among people who mostly were of the same

opinion as the pope in Avignon. The third sentiment grew among people who believed that the conflict between the pope and the emperor could be resolved by an ecumenical council, which then revealed the divine authority above both the pope and the emperor. The fourth sentiment grew among people who believed that above any human authority there must be a transcendent realm which might be accessed by ordinary people; and this belief is manifested in the form of popular spiritual movements, e.g. the Beguines, and of the popular theological movement known to be the Modern Devotion (Ozment 1980, 91). Eventually, the fifth sentiment grew among intellectuals who believed that the study of humanities would be of help for the study of theology (Ozment 1980, 70-71). Those five contending layers were at the backdrop of the historical stage, when Luther, Calvin, and other reformers were dedicating their life for the sixteenth-century Reformation.

Furthermore, looking back into deeper historical layers, we see that the way for the sixteenth-century Reformation had been paved by the eighth-century Carolingian Renaissance when Charlemagne created a clerical school in Aachen to develop the seven liberal arts: i.e. grammar, logic, mathematics, reading, writing, speaking, and sound reasoning (Ozment 1980, 3). Subsequently, the way for the Reformation was prepared by the thirteenth-century Italian Renaissance that could be seen as “the birth of modern consciousness” (Ozment 1980, 8, 305) as it opened a way for the Western humanists to cultivate their intellectual talent. Furthermore, despite its commitment to the radical Catholicism, the tragedy of Jan Hus in the Council of Constance (1414-1418) and the anathema of the Council of Trent (1545-1563) were always part of the backdrops of the revolutionary movements of the sixteenth-century Reformation (Ozment 1980, 389). Hence, we can underscore that the idea of reforming the church is not exclusively of the sixteenth-century Protestant movement, but also of the Catholic Church through the ages. The Reformation was not a total breach from the old Catholicism; instead, it was a continuation of the catholic faith of orthodox Christianity that opened the eye of faith, based on the reading of the Bible, toward the challenging future of human life.

However, in the discourse of church history, the idea of reforming the church has become more and more a technical terminology. Commonly, the term of “the Reformation” is placed within the Protestant domain, pointing to the birth of a new era challenging the papal supremacy in the Holy Roman Empire. The era was started by Luther’s Theses stimulating national movements in Germany and other parts of Western Europe, as it also influenced Henry VIII’s challenge toward papal authority over the Church of England. Stimulated by Luther’s Ninety-five Theses in 1517, there were massive national movements under the idea of reforming the church in Switzerland (1520s), Skandinavia (1520s), England and Ireland (since Henry VIII’s breach of the papal authority in 1520s), Scotland (1560), France (1559), the Netherlands (1561), Scandinavia (1520s), Hungary and Transylvania (since 1520s). Under the spirit of reforming the church, those movements became revolutionary forces that created civil wars (Thompson 1999, 13). In this context, we see that, while the Catholics tried to confirm their loyalty with Roman Catholicism, the Protestants identified their position as the emerging forces of church renewal, reinterpreting the ecclesiastical house of authority, i.e. the sacred scriptures and the magisterium of the church, based on a new hermeneutic of responsibility: *coram Deo* (admitting the presence of the eternal judgment of God in human history).

On the Protestant side, among Lutherans, the new hermeneutic would include the writings of Luther and his friends. Similarly, among the Anabaptists, the new hermeneutic would include authoritative writings such as the ones of Menno Simons, promoting radical commitment to

the Christian church as the visible sign of new order of God's Kingdom. Likewise, among the Calvinists, the new hermeneutic has been ascribed to the writings of John Calvin and the people of public confession who have rooted their Christian faith in the social order of the state. The background of those movements was the sixteenth-century struggle against the medieval Roman Catholicism that dominated the official ecclesiastical hermeneutic regarding the house of authority of the church, i.e. the sacred scriptures and the magisterium of the church. The sixteenth-century Reformation, Protestantism—either as Lutheranism, as Anabaptism, or as Calvinism—was not the genesis of a new Christianity; it was the birth of new hermeneutics of the ancient-orthodox-catholic Christian faith challenged by existential questions regarding the future of human life.

At this point, we can narrow down the discussion about the hermeneutics of the church's tradition as it has grown among the Calvinists or what today is called the Reformed tradition. This tradition was shaped by the life and work of John Calvin (1509-1564), the French reformer of Geneva, who gave direction to the effort of reforming the church that intended not to create a new sectarian movement of Christianity but to continue the history of the Kingdom of Christ in the world of the human race.

Calvinism and the Reformed Tradition

Who is Calvin?

Although the idea of Calvinism can be linked to several historical figures (Calvin, Bullinger, Beza, etc.) we focus in this study especially on Calvin, without depreciating the influence of the other, above-mentioned figures. John Calvin (1509-1564) was a Frenchman born in Noyon, received his education on humanities in Paris and on the science of law in the universities of Orleans and Bourges, started his academic career in the royal intellectual circle of the University of Paris but then met his stumbling block in the matter of Nicolas Cop's academic address, in 1533, reflecting the perilous situation regarding the issue of the heretics (Parker 1975, 30). It was the custom of the time that the rector of University of Paris gave a public oration on All Saints' Day, so on November 1, 1533, Nicolas Cop had prepared an academic text for the speech. The speech was about the evangelical values in the Beatitudes (Mat 5:2ff.), arguing about the primacy of the transcending values of the Gospel beyond the authority of the institutional church. Unfortunately, the speech stimulated a riot as the theologians of the university said that Cop's speech indicated the teaching of Luther, so that it was tainted by heresy. This forced Nicholas Cop to leave the city of Paris before the police moved in for his arrest. The target of the police action was not only the rector of the university, but also the people surrounding him that might be suspected to be under his influence. Among Cop's friends, John Calvin was on the list of the police's target. Fortunately, he was able to leave the city before they could arrest him (Parker 1975, 30).

Since then, Calvin became a refugee wandering from one place to another. At first, he went to Strasbourg, where he wrote and published the first edition of the famous *Institutes* to clarify the issue of heretics that had been blamed upon the people who dared to criticize the Roman Catholic hierarchy in France. Subsequently, from 1536 to 1538, Calvin joined the Genevan reformer Farel in order to manage the reformation of the city (Cottret 2000, 107-131). Yet, in 1538, by his ministerial effort to effect serious moral checking (*censura morum*) of those who wanted to receive the Holy Communion, Calvin got into trouble with some high Geneva politicians who forced him to leave the city. He then, from 1538 to 1541, worked as a minister among the French refugees in Strasbourg. Yet, after that, the city

council of Geneva asked him to help them in continuing the reformation there. After a period of hesitation, eventually Calvin agreed and went back to the city as an adored reformer until the end of his life in 1564. From this ministerial position, he organized the ministry of the Word and the sacraments that had a Reformed character designed to be a serious edification of the Christian life. He produced many letters, organized a strong ministerial body, the consistory of Geneva, and developed the Academy of Geneva that provided educated human resources for the next generation of the Reformation. Calvin's contribution was significant not only for Geneva but also for the parties of the Reformation in many places of Western Europe.

What is Calvin's Legacy?

The most important part of Calvin's legacy is his theology. Calvin's theology provides a significant method to bridge the quest for Christian orthodoxy and the need for reorganizing the church without support from papal hierarchy. As one might say, Calvin's theological method is a new epistemology (Richard 1974, 180) that has laid the foundation for the importance of individual authenticity by which one experiences the freedom of conscience as an independent human being.

To ascribe divine authority to anything else than the One whom one has personally experienced, Calvin considered as idolatry. He argued against making any external authority the ultimate criterion of truth. Without the indwelling Spirit, the Gospel could lead only to positivism or legalism. The Word and all words are related to God's Being through the living action of the Holy Spirit. In opening himself to the influence of the Spirit, man is able to feel the presence of God, to experience His touch and sense the immediacy of His presence. Through the action of the Spirit, the believer is made capable of distinguishing the reality of God from the products of his own mind (Richard 1974, 180).

While Calvin's theology is devoted to the very root of Christianity, namely the canonical Scriptures and the Church Fathers, at the same time it creates a creative space for the birth of individual human consciousness that must use its faith to deal with actual challenges. It is a theology which assumes that God is directly present among His people without any intermediary. The instruments that might be of help in the divine-human relationship, including the papal hierarchy and sacramental matters, are by nature secondary. They cannot claim divinity, which belongs solely to God who dwells among His people in Christ through the Holy Spirit. In this context, all Christians have a place in the church to live freely according to their consciousness. As long as they acknowledge the Holy Scriptures and maintain an orderly Christian life, so that they might live responsibly in human society, they are truly Christians and cannot be accused of being heretics.

What is Calvin's Theology?

While the Lutherans would not accept Calvin's theology because it did not acknowledge the pastoral function of the bishop, the Anabaptists could not accept the theology of Calvin because it did not promote any breach with the secular order. In this context of theological debate, Calvin's theology maintains the *via media* by stressing the power of the Holy Spirit beyond the worldly order of the human beings. In the sacrament, Christ is truly present in His divinity by His crossing over the unbridgeable gap between the material and divine worlds, through the power of the Holy Spirit. Likewise, in the human society framed by the

worldly order, Christ is truly present by His crossing over the unbridgeable gap between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of man, through the power of the Holy Spirit. Accordingly, by opening their heart to the work of the Holy Spirit, the believers would see the work of God in the world. Calvin says:

... it is the Spirit who, everywhere diffused, sustains all things, causes them to grow, and quickens them in heaven and earth. Because he is circumscribed by no limits, he is excluded from the category of creatures; but in transfusing into all things his energy, and breathing into them essence, life, and movement, he is indeed plainly divine. (Inst. 1.13.14)

Therefore, the believer could have faith that God is present in the world and in human society, as the Kingdom of God is already here in the world of mankind. But, the reality of the divine presence is coming absolutely from God alone. It cannot be engineered by human authority. It cannot be transformed into any kind of religious power that claims its divinity over every aspect of individual life. The real presence of God is absolutely coming from above, and its authenticity cannot be claimed by any human agent without falling into idolatry. In the world of sinful human beings, the real presence of God is grounded not in the glory of man but in the glory of God; the real presence of God is in the pure religion and not in the human constructed religion who claims its power of divinity over any kinds of human institution in the world. In this case, it is important for a believer to behave carefully: one should place one's existence before the tribunal judgment of God; and one should manage one's worship as simply as possible so that he or she could remove any kinds of idolatry that, substituting the true divinity of God, emerge from its daily practice. Calvin says:

Now we must also hold that all who corrupt pure religion—and this is sure to happen when each is given to his own opinion—separate themselves from the one and only God. Indeed, they will boast that they have something else in mind; but what they intended, or what they have persuaded themselves of, has not much bearing on the matter, seeing that the Holy Spirit pronounces them all to be apostates who in the blindness of their own minds substitute demons in place of God. . . . It is therefore no wonder that the Holy Spirit rejects as base all cults contrived through the will of men; for in the heavenly mysteries, opinion humanly conceived, even if it does not always give birth to a great heap of errors, is nevertheless the mother of error. And though nothing more harmful may result, yet to worship an unknown god by chance is no light fault. . . . Each man will stand upon his own judgment rather than subject himself to another's decision. Therefore, since either the custom of the city or the agreement of tradition is too weak and frail a bond of piety to follow in worshipping God, it remains for God himself to give witness of himself from heaven. (Inst. 1.5.13)

Like a sword, this kind of theology has two cutting edges: the one is deconstructing any human optimism of being the divine instrument in the real world; the other is absolute dependency on the intervention of divine help through the Holy Spirit. In this sense, Calvin's theology provides a profound challenge to the human authenticity by which one develops his or her daily life before the judgment of God.

Explaining Calvin's theology, Karl Barth saw it as dialectics between the human existence and the revelation of God (Barth 1995, 2). The dialectics reveal that the human existence—that might be called a human soul or being—is always in relation to God; and this perpetual relationship is the source of the knowledge of God (Barth 1995, 155). In these dialectics, the knowledge of God will provide the knowledge of humankind, and vice versa (Barth 1995, 162-172). In these dialectics the sacramental realities will reveal their divine nature not because of the administering human spiritual power but because of the providing activity of God who seals his promise into human spiritual awareness:

Calvin calls a sacrament an appendix of the promise by which God seals the promise and makes it more credible to us. He stresses that the promise itself does not need this seal. God's truthfulness is sure enough in itself. It is our "imbecility" that needs it. The sacrament thus bears testimony to the grace of God by means of an outward symbol that confirms our faith. (Barth 1995, 174)

The vehicle for the sacramental realities is the church (Barth 1995, 177-186) which must be protected from the false sacraments that, created by human ignorance, want to grasp God in their hands (Barth 1995, 187-184). The church protects the sacramental realities by defending the freedom of conscience, so that individual humans might think critically about their moral quality before the judging eyes of God. In this perspective, by using their freedom of conscience, the members of the church have to live in the dialectics between the ecclesiastical realm of the church and the secular realm of state, between the order of the gospel and the order of the law (Barth 1995, 194-226).

From another perspective, Wilhelm Niesel has seen that Calvin's theology has deep roots in the Christian orthodoxy, as it maintains the Chalcedonian doctrine of the two natures of Christ, "union but not fusion: distinction but not separation" (Niesel 1980, 247). This principle sustains his theology of the Trinity, which is extensively discussed in the process of developing the Institutes. In the four volumes of the book, Calvin elaborates his theology on several topics: i.e., the knowledge of God and of man, the Trinity, the creation and providence, the sin, the law of God, the Old and New Testaments, Christ as the Mediator, the grace of Christ in the Church, the life of a Christian person, prayer, divine election, the Church, the sacraments, and the worldly government. Those topics explain the main theory of Calvin's theology that revolves around the principle that everything in the world—even the evil situation—is pronouncing the glory of God. The divine glory is the source of human salvation *par excellence*: it is in the glory of God that human beings find their true salvation, even if they must face perilous situations. This principle states that the salvation never comes from human efforts, as its source is the supreme will of God which is substantially soteriological. This soteriological will of God is revealed by the doctrine of the Trinity that manifests the will of the Father which is done by the obedience of the Son in the incarnation of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. In the incarnation of Christ, God is really present in the human world in order to confront the reality of evil without being tainted by sin as is revealed by the total obedience of the Son to the Father. The obedience of the Son is accompanied by the Holy Spirit in union but not fusion, in distinction but not separation, so that it is on the one hand truly human obedience and on the other hand truly divine intervention. This situation revealed the existence of divine election: i.e., God in his sovereignty has chosen a number of human beings to be his people that embody the Trinitarian soteriological will. The triumph of Christ against the power of sin reveals the glory of God *par excellence*, which is distributed to the lives of the elected people revealing the eternal battle between the human beings and their sinful nature. In this eternal battle, the elected people should perform their compliment/compliance to the will of God as it has been revealed by the obedience of the Son to the Father through the power of the Holy Spirit. By doing so, they will live in Christ and will take part in both His struggle of the cross and His glorious resurrection. In this kind of life, Christians become both the people who rely absolutely on divine grace and the people who produce a lot of great effort:

As our Saviour, He reveals Himself also and in one unified process as our Lord. We have now to enquire about this second aspect. We should be eluding the fact of Christ if we failed to see that our life is determined not only by justification but also by the second gift, namely sanctification. However essential be our persistence in Christian freedom, it is from this second point of view [i.e. seeing Christ as our Lord, and dealing seriously with our duty of sanctification] that Calvin has with particular attention

mapped out the Christian life. He has given the ethical appendix to His account of sanctification the direct heading: "Of the life of a Christian man." (Niesel 1980, 142)

John Calvin did not initially develop his theology as an academic exercise but as a pastoral instrument in dealing with tyrannical oppression in France during the 1530's, in doing his ministerial work among the French refugees in Strasbourg (1538-1541), and in maintaining the process of reformation in Geneva which had to deal with both local and international affairs (1536-1538, 1541-1564).¹ In this context, it can be said that Calvin's theology has a pastoral intention in dealing with what one might call the Christian life in the real world, as John Leith mentioned: "the decisive character of the Christian life is revealed [in Calvin's theology] by the very fact that Calvin added the section on the Christian life as a conclusion to the Institutes of 1539" (Leith 1989, 25). The idea of "Christian life" is a theological conception about the dynamic of faith struggling for a living actualization in the real world. This dynamic is a circular process dealing with the question about how the true faith could be significantly implemented in the real life and how the real life itself could clarify the language of faith. Having faith in the real life would mean that one should live passionately in history; one has to be in an on-going process of winning the struggle, and of having a kind of heroism:

Calvin's interpretation of the Christian life inspired a vigorous and aggressive spirit. On the human level it involved a real conquest of evil. In its relation to God it had no less incentive than his glory. It followed naturally for the Calvinist to exhibit an unusual aggressiveness in history. Calvin himself described the Christian life in terms of progress, conquest, and heroism. (Leith 1989, 231)

John Leith has stated that, regarding the Christian life, Calvin's theology includes at least three aspects of the human religious enterprise: firstly, faith to the glory of God revealed by Jesus Christ, the Law of God, and the Bible (Leith 1989, 37-65); secondly, personal repentance manifested in true piety revealing the spiritual dynamics of mortification and vivification by the exercises of self-denial, cross bearing, and meditation on the future life before the divine judgment (Leith 1989, 65-82); and thirdly, active involvement in the creation of a new culture or ethos of Christian life that might help Christians to grow in the obedience to God in the daily life of human society (Leith 1989, 82-86). These three aspects of human religious enterprise are inseparable from the divine activity in Christ that grants salvation to the human beings through justification by faith that, through the power of the Holy Spirit, resolves the tragedy of the Fall and human sinfulness (Leith 1989, 87-106). Likewise, these aspects of human religious enterprise are always in relation to the divine activity in time and eternity. They are always framed by the divine providence and predestination, which are challenging human responsibility and revealing its substantial quality before the judgment of God. In other words, the dynamics of Christian life have both historical and trans-historical characteristics (Leith 1989, 107-165). Therefore, the three aspects of human religious enterprise—to have faith to the glory of God, to work on personal repentance, and to endeavour a culture of faithful life—will always be indivisible from the social world; Christian life always has a social character. It is committed to the well-being of the human society (Leith 1989, 166-212).

¹The growth of Calvin's theology can be studied in the works of some modern scholars such as Richard Muller (Muller 2000), Ford Lewis Battles (Battles 1996; Battles and Hugo 1969), Alister McGrath (McGrath 1990), Marijn de Kroon (Kroon 2001), John Hesselink (Hesselink 1992, 1997), Paul Helm (Helm 2004), etc. Calvin studies are also endeavoured by Roman Catholic scholars such as Alexandre Ganoczy (Ganoczy 1987, 1989), Dennis Tamburello (Tamburello 1994), and Joseph Tylenda (Tylenda 1992). A modern translation of the *Institutes* is provided by Ford Lewis Battles (Calvin 1960, 1975; Battles 1980).

How Did Calvin's Legacy Become the Reformed Tradition?

As it was created as an interpretation of the sixteenth-century Reformation, Calvin's theology has grown in the midst of historical currents which created a kind of chemical reaction that blew up into a gigantic political turbulence against the medieval papacy. From its distinctive position, Calvin's theology has contributed to the genesis of what one might call the Reformed tradition. This tradition has typically a Calvinistic quality, which John Leith regarded as the ethos of the Reformed tradition pointing to "the faith of a people" which is not only written in theological books, structured in organizations, and expressed in worship, but also "embodied in style and manner of life" (Leith 1992, 5). John Leith saw that "at least nine identifiable motifs have significantly shaped the Reformed style of being a Christian" (Leith 1992, 5). These nine motifs are as follows: firstly, it strongly emphasizes the theological idea of the majesty of God; secondly, it is very aggressive toward the issue of idolatry; thirdly, it has strong orientation to the working out of the divine purposes in history so that, fourthly, it has a strong commitment to ethics as a life of holiness; accordingly, fifthly, it considers rationality as the service of God and, sixthly, it believes that preaching is the ministry of the Word of God; seventhly, it is devoted to the organized church and pastoral care, so that, eighthly, in the life of the church there should be a discipline that edifies the spirituality of the Christians; and finally, ninthly, it puts simplicity as the premium value of daily life.

These nine characteristics of Reformed tradition could be summarized into a single particular feature: namely, the Christian faith should not be kept in the shadow, but it must be manifested publicly in a confession of faith followed by a strong commitment to live a responsible Christian life. In other words, the Reformed or Calvinist tradition is characterized by a strong commitment to articulate the Christian faith in the public life of society. Subsequently, the history of the Reformed Christianity revealed that the Calvinist martyrs were recognized to be the confessors of such a public faith.

In the sixteenth century, there were many public confessors of the Reformed faith challenging the establishment of the medieval papal hierarchy. Many of them disappeared into historical oblivion, but several others were remembered because of the existence of some significant confessions, which have become monumental figures of the Reformed tradition, such as John Calvin who stood behind the French Confession of 1559, John Knox behind the Scots Confession of 1560, and Guido de Brès behind the Belgic confession of 1561 (Gootjes 2007, 50). In France, the Reformed confession became an institution of faith for the Huguenots, who, for many years, suffered political oppression from the ruling party. On the other hand, in Scotland, the Reformed confession became a political instrument of the Church of England to defend its authority against the papal regime in the country. Even so, it was in the Netherlands that the Reformed confession influenced the Netherlands to become a state in which the Reformed church became a dominant factor as the public church of the Republic of the Seven Provinces from 1588 to 1795 (De Jong 1986, 162-245), before the state became what nowadays is called the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

In the Netherlands, there are three monumental documents, namely, the Belgic Confession of 1561, the Heidelberg Catechism of 1563, and the articles of Dort of 1619. These three monumental documents have become symbols of unity among the Reformed believers. Besides many articles of faith, the Belgic Confession recognizes explicitly the Protestant canon of the Bible. Likewise, in the Heidelberg Catechism, the kindly comforting love of God is emphasized. This comforting love of God creates, redeems, and sanctifies His people, in Christ, through the Holy Spirit, as it is articulated in the Bible. This comforting love of

God is solely in the divine majesty and no human institutions can make any claim to be the dispenser of its supernatural grace. Eventually, in the articles of Dort, the Calvinistic belief in the doctrine of predestination is determined, which transcends both the laws of nature and history, revealing the Kingdom of Christ in which the Saviour becomes the supreme king, prophet, and priest. This Kingdom is manifested in the life of the Church in the real world that should be maintained by a biblical church order revealing the function of king, prophet, and priest in daily life of human society.

After the Synod of Dort (1618-1619), the Dutch republic was less tolerant toward the un-Reformed groups such as the Catholics, the Remonstrant, and the Anabaptists. As the Reformed faith had become more and more the major group in society, the un-Reformed religious institutions were forbidden to be visible in public life. Although the Roman Catholicism had become the religion of the mighty power of the Holy Roman Empire, in the Netherlands at that time, the Catholics had to go underground and the Roman rites had to be exercised in the shadow, away from daily public life.

That situation gradually changed after the American War of Independence (1775-1783) and the French Revolution (1789-1799), when people in the Netherlands began to recognize the idea of religious freedom. Moreover, at the end of the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815), the Crown of Holland was established without the cross, pointing to the fact that it was not a continuation of the Holy Roman Empire. According to the spirit of religious freedom within the new Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Reformed faith was subsequently protected by the Crown, in an equal way as other denominations such as the Remonstrants, the Mennonites, the Roman Catholic church and the Jews, and it was called the *Hervormde Kerk*, which means the renewed Reformed church, pointing to the political effort to manage the diverse Reformed movements in the Netherlands that were called the *Gereformeerde* (i.e. having been reformed) churches.

In 1834, however, that unifying political approach met another problem as there was a breach in the Reformed church, usually called the *Afscheiding* or Secession. At that time, there was a group of people who believed that the national Reformed church had become a state church and lost its Reformed character. They challenged the legitimate status of the Reformed Church (*Hervormde Kerk*). The party of the new established church believed that they were in line with the Reformed tradition, which had come into a deliberative process in 1809 by which the Reformed congregations in the Netherlands agreed that there should be a reorganization of the ecclesiastical management in the country (De Jong 1986, 305). Yet for the challenging party, i.e. the Secessionists of 1834, it was believed that the true Calvinist church should be organized not as a centralized national ecclesiastical power but as independent “consistories” (i.e. the local church boards) that manage mutual alignment with their fellow sister churches. The opposition culminated in the 1834 Secession (*Afscheiding*) that split the Reformed churches in the Netherlands into the centralized *Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk* (NHK) and several decentralized churches, which in 1892 united and became the *Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland* (GKN).

On the *Hervormde* side, the separation ensued (De Jong 1986, 334-374). Under the influence of Abraham Kuyper,² the issue of “modernism” became a stumbling block for the Reformed

² Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920) was an important figure in the Reformed (*Gereformeerde*) history in the Netherlands (De Jong 1986a, 351-352). Like his father, he became a Reformed minister as well and got his doctorate in theology in 1862. He was very committed to Calvin's theology and he saw that the Netherlands was a manifestation of the Kingdom of Christ. He got involved in political life and became a member of parliament; also, he became the founder of the *Vrije Universiteit* in Amsterdam; and eventually, he achieved the highest

faith. It was seen as a virus coming from the French revolution, which had an extreme orientation toward secularism and was malevolent toward church tradition. Kuyper believed that the issue of modernism brought by the French Revolution was endangering the commitment of Dutch Reformed faith to the Kingdom of Christ. Yet, because his influence was not supported by all ruling church leaders, he and his followers were treated as people who did not have a proper place in the church. Therefore, they identified themselves as the people who criticized the mistake done by the ruling church leaders who inclined more to the modernism than to the principles of the Bible. For this reason, Kuyper and his followers identified themselves to be the people complaining; they called themselves the people of the *Doleantie* (Lament or Protest), referring to the critical mode of existence behind the Latin word *dolere*: i.e. to excuse, to make objections, to complain. They complained that the church in the Netherlands should not be submitted under the secular philosophy of modernism, as the church should live solely under the Word of God. This complaint was put into action against the domination of the *Hervormde* church leaders. In 1886, they claimed their right upon de *Nieuwe Kerk* (i.e. the New Church) in Amsterdam and for some time held control over the church building. Accordingly, despite their failure to have judicial recognition toward their claim, the 1886 success was recognized to be the historical pinpoint for the emergence of the *Doleantie* movement in the Netherlands.

Meanwhile, in 1879, Kuyper organized an institution of higher education which would have a strong commitment to the Reformed tradition. It was believed that this university would become a strong fortress to defend Christian freedom against the virus of “modernism” or the malevolent philosophy of the French Revolution. Accordingly, the university was established in 1880 and was called de *Vrije Universiteit*, i.e. the Free University, where he became its first rector (De Jong 1986, 353). The name of the university reflected the sentiment of “anti-[French] Revolution” among the Dutch people of his time, who believed that as a Reformed people they should have not only a democratic society but also a Christian democratic life. Through this name, it was hoped that the intellectual process of the university would be free from the malevolent attitude toward religion that had been endorsed by the French Revolution.³

After that, in 1892, there was a synod that united the *Gereformeerde* movements in the Netherlands. Before the *Doleantie*, these movements did not become manifest in massive social actions, although the anti-Revolutionary sentiment existed among Dutch people under the idea of anti-modernism. After the 1886 *Doleantie*, the sentiment suddenly changed into a significant force yearning for social change. In the political realm, this force turned into the *Anti-Revolutionaire Partij*, while in the ecclesiastical realm it entailed the first uniting *Gereformeerde* synod in 1892. The name of this synod was the synod of the “*Christelijk gereformeerden*” or the synod of the Christian Reformed (De Jong 1986b, 359), and later on it was called the synod of the *Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland* (GKN) (i.e. the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands).

The name of *Gereformeerd* (i.e. Reformed) articulated the spirit of Calvinism or of the Reformed tradition, namely, unity in diversity, as it could be illustrated in the history of

position in the government as a Prime Minister (1901-1905). His influence was significant for the growth of the *Gereformeerde* tradition in his time. Likewise, while he became Prime Minister, the Dutch government created a particular policy for the people in the Netherlands Indies. This policy was the so-called Ethical Politics that recognized the rights of the Indonesian people to have a greater access to social justice. Regarding the history of the *Gereformeerde* churches in Indonesia, see the work of A. Algra (1967).

³In 1879, Kuyper founded a political party with the name of *Anti-Revolutionaire Partij*, reflecting the sentiments of a part of the Dutch population of that time.

religious pluralism in the Netherlands (Schutte 2002, 17). While defending the ancient Christian creed about the catholicity of the church, as the Reformed people, they believed that the Kingdom of Christ is experienced by Christian individuals in their actual life framed by local and temporal contexts. The catholicity of the church will come into being as a communion among local churches that experience the Kingdom of Christ in their historical reality. In this train of thought, the Reformed tradition gives much emphasis to the existence of the local church, where everyone's voice can be heard and each participation may have a place in the theological realm of the Kingdom of Christ.

This theological argument could be interpreted as another way of speaking about what nowadays is called democracy. In a democratic society, the individual freedom of conscience is protected by the state, because it is believed that somehow the Creator of the Universe is revealing His Kingdom to the human beings through His communion with every individual human being. What was typically Reformed tradition in the past has become the idea of modern democracy, so to speak. If this is true, we might say that after four centuries Calvin's theology had developed in the global political culture as to democratic life both in the realm of the church and in the political life in the secular society. It has become a Christian theology about democracy.

We have seen a glimpse of the history of Reformed tradition, especially as it has grown in the Netherlands. Now, how do we define the idea of Reformed spirituality?

Calvinism and the Idea of Spirituality

Spirituality in the Calvinist Tradition: How Could It Be?

The word "spirituality" is rarely used in the conversation about Calvin, Calvinist tradition, or what is usually called Reformed Christianity. Some scholars (Richard 1974; Bouwsma 1988) have tried to argue that, in the discourse of Calvin's legacy, there should be the idea of spirituality. Richard says:

Calvin faced squarely the epistemological problems inherent in the renewal of theology and the implications of this renewal in the realm of spirituality. Research in Calvin has never focused its attention on the epistemology grounding his spirituality. In attempting to give proper weight both to the significant continuity of Calvin's spirituality with preceding and contemporary spiritualities and at the same time to its remarkable diversity, the focus has to be brought to bear upon Calvin's epistemology. The originality of Calvin's position is attributable to his epistemology and to the basic structure of his theory of the knowledge of God. The root and reason for the originality and distinctiveness of his spirituality lay within his epistemology. This epistemology established the proper foundations for the incipient individualistic and personalistic traits of the spirituality of the *Devotio Moderna*. It also led to a new ecclesiological model and to the resolution of the question of the mediating role of the Church in the spiritual life of the believer. (Richard 1974, 8-9)

Likewise, Bouwsma believes that there should be the idea of spirituality in the discourse about Calvin's legacy, although for the most part Calvinist scholars are hesitant to pronounce Calvin's religion as a kind of spirituality, saying:

Calvin's spirituality had its origins in the rhetorical tradition represented in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by Renaissance humanism. He acknowledged Lorenzo Valla not only as a distinguished scholar but also as an ally in the doctrine of predestination. His first published work was a commentary on Seneca, composed in a deliberate effort to outshine Erasmus. He knew the biblical scholarship of Erasmus well, but, unlike Luther, he generally avoided direct criticism of the great northern humanist.

That Calvin's religion has not been generally treated as "spirituality" is largely a result of the widespread notion of Calvin as a systematic and dogmatic theologian, a conception that probably says more about later Calvinism than about Calvin. Calvin thought of himself as an exclusively biblical theologian, and he was well aware of what this implied about all human theologizing. He valued system and expressed himself systematically only for limited, practical, and pedagogical purposes. Otherwise he distrusted the all-too-human impulse to systematize, above all in religious matters. (Bouwmsma 1988, 317-318)

However, the theory of Richard and of Bouwmsma, that there is a discourse about spirituality in Calvin's theology, represents a minority in the field of Calvin studies. There is so little literary evidence which can prove that Calvin and his followers had ever used the word spirituality.

The word Calvin used in the title of the Institutes is not the word spirituality but piety. The first edition of the Institutes was published in Basel, in 1533, with a long title indicating the intention of the writer: "Institutes of the Christian Religion: Embracing almost the whole sum of piety, and whatever is necessary to know the doctrine of salvation. A work most worthy to be read by all persons zealous for piety, and recently published" (Calvin 1975, iii). Calvin intended his Institutes to be a significant instrument for cultivating Christian piety as the true expression of faith that transcends any religious bias caused by idolatry. With the skill of a qualified artist, Calvin articulated that the evangelical faith lies above the teaching power of the papal church as it is present in the form of piety in personal consciousness rather than of official religion in the political system of the church.

It should be noted, however, that Calvin's idea of piety is not a dream about individualism that is alienated from the social world. Instead, Calvin's idea of piety is a criticism coming from his knowledge about the hitherto social-political situation, when the state was always related to the church and the political language was constructed by theological perspectives of the church. Discussing Calvin's effort to define the idea of piety, Serena Jones says:

As my discussion of Calvin's definition of *pietas* has revealed, he approaches the question of the knowledge of God with great seriousness, both as a theologian and as a student of scripture and the tradition. Nonetheless, this rhetorical analysis does expose the unavoidably political nature of Calvin's theological language. It shows that Calvin's theological enterprise cannot be easily disentangled from the context within which he conceived it. His definition of *pietas* was not wrought in a vacuum but emerged in the midst of a pressing social crisis, and the terms with which it was elaborated consisted a position within this crisis. (Jones 1995, 139)

In other words, Calvin's idea of piety is not aimed to be a religion of silence, in which the faith is experienced in the shadows of society, but to be a faith in the praxis; it should be expressed publicly by an open communication, in order that the voice of the Gospel may transform the world through the lives of the believers in society. Calvin's idea of piety is about living the Christian faith in the real world as an active church that works for the evangelical perfection in a fragile human environment. In this sense, Calvin's idea of piety has a pastoral character heading to the challenging world and not to the solitary zone. For Calvin, piety is not just to satisfy personal happiness but is to help others to experience God in the world. In other words, for Calvin, piety is faith in action; it is a Christian life in praxis to deal with actual challenges in the world. Pronouncing the pastoral character of his piety, Elsie Anne McKee writes:

Christians need human direction in prayer and example in how to live their vocations and bear their trials. They need these from one another and owe them to one another. But especially they need them from those who have been gifted by God's Spirit and called by the church to be pastors and other leaders, people who are able by training and by experience to speak God's word and be God's instruments in a special way. The instruments are not themselves different from other believers, but their office and gifts

are particularly fitted to teaching and stirring others up to pray and live according to God's will. Therefore there is a strong pastoral element in the expression of Calvin's piety. (McKee 2001, 6)

In his time, Calvin struggled for the authenticity of Christian faith, because at that time people were living in a political church by which theology became politics. Calvin saw that the French sovereign was influenced by theologians of Paris, who infused the papal power into the French political realm. Through the politics of eradicating Lutheranism in France, this situation took many lives of pious Christians who wanted to live according to their personal conscience. If he had not fled his country, Calvin himself would have become a victim of that situation. Through this context, Calvin did learn the subtle difference between the true religion—or what he then called piety—and the false one. The true religion would liberate human's potentiality, which in the modern world is called human right, as a part of one's effort to follow the path of the Lord in the world, but on the other hand the false religion—or what then he called to be idolatry—would trap one's religious effort into a power system devoted to vainglory and false humandeification.

Even more, Calvin's theological effort was in fact a piety of combating any power system that sustains idolatry. This combating effort has an affirmative religious effect, namely, that human beings can have a true devotion toward the majesty of God beyond any religious symbol and institution. This struggle was against any political process designed to "domesticate" God, as John Leith says:

Idolatry, Calvin contended, is man's effort to domesticate God and to conform him to man's definition of who He should be. It contradicts the fundamental rubric that "God himself is the sole and proper witness of himself." God is not at man's disposal. He is the Creator of all things visible and invisible. He is the transcendent, free Lord. His authority and dignity are not to be confused with, shared with, or fastened to any created reality. God is sovereignly free in the declaring of who He is. Man can only listen, ceaselessly correcting and reforming his understanding of who God is. (Leith 1968, 112)

The combating effort against idolatry has a social character; it is not an isolated solipsism. From Calvin's struggle, we could learn that the Reformed faith has a social commitment to reconstructing a just social order. Individual pietism, as it had grown in the seventeenth-century German pietism (Enger 1983, 300-301), would contradict with the stressing point of Reformed theology. Individual efforts to develop what one might call personal spirituality would become a rare phenomenon in the Reformed tradition.

Hence, as the discourse of spirituality has become a strong current within the contemporary theology, it is worthwhile to take some notes on the current idea of spirituality. Likewise, in order to create a theological ground for the discussion about Reformed spirituality, it is important to reflect on the significance of the discourse on spirituality to the Reformed tradition. Without the pretension to give a detailed survey we intend to give in the next section just an impression of the current debate on spirituality, especially in the United States. It is meant as a kind of intermezzo in order to arrive at an adequate definition.

Approaching the Idea of Spirituality

The issue of spirituality, which is used in so many topics today, is a surprisingly new phenomenon. The pragmatic intention contained in the use of the word 'spirituality' has a new meaning, which is absorbed from the modern world. Philip Sheldrake illustrates the novelty of the issue in his research as follows:

The word 'spirituality' is used so frequently nowadays that it comes as a surprise to find that its pedigree is very short both in theological and secular writing. A comparison of The Catholic Encyclopedia,

published between 1912-15, with the revised New Catholic Encyclopedia of the 1970s is revealing. In the first there are no references to 'spirituality', while in the second there are eight articles that employ the word. Secular usage, however, remains conservative. In the Oxford Dictionary, and in the Websters International Dictionary of 1961, six meanings are given. Five of these do not correspond to 'spirituality' as a religious area of study: three definitions refer to incorporeal beings or volatility, and two to the obsolete social class of 'persons spiritual', that is, ecclesiastics. The six definitions, while related to the contemporary religious meaning, is firmly dualistic: the condition of being spiritual, or regard for things of the spirit as opposed to material interests. (Sheldrake 1991b, 34)

Sheldrake has continued his research by tracing the deeper layers of the usage of the concept of 'spirituality' in history. He found that the usage of the word has passed through the times of the early church, the patristic era, the Middle Ages, and the modern era (Sheldrake 1991a, 34-53). In the New Testament, the idea of 'spirituality' was elaborated by Paul to illustrate: firstly, the unity between individual Christian with the Lord⁴; secondly, the very source of the knowledge of God⁵; and, thirdly, a distinctive quality that makes a difference between individual divine values and individual carnal forces.⁶ Then, in the patristic era, as it was represented by Jerome's writings, the idea of 'spirituality' was used to continue the Pauline qualitative approach toward the human life of divine values. After that, in the Medieval Christianity, as it was represented by Thomas Aquinas, the idea of 'spirituality' was used both in the sense of Pauline theology and in the perspective of the non-material world. As Thomas Aquinas had thought dialectically, his writings imply that the idea of 'spirituality' was a shift toward the anti-material point of view. Implemented in the political realm of the church, this perspective became a legal terminology: 'spirituality' was the word that had been used to designate the properties of the church: namely, the material belongings, institutional norms and values, and human resources of the Roman Catholic Church. In this sense, it is understandable that the sixteenth-century reformers were reluctant to use the word spirituality. Moreover, in the seventeenth century, there was a theological criticism toward French mysticism that made use of the word spirituality for its quest to a supernatural reality:

'Spiritualité' was used in the seventeenth-century French, though in a pejorative sense at first. 'La nouvelle spiritualité' of Madame Guyon was a type of mysticism to be condemned because *inter alia* it was too refined, rarefied, insufficiently related to earthly life. (Wakefield 1983, 361)

However, the negative attitude toward the word spirituality was gradually evolved at the end of the nineteenth century, when "Abbé Pourrat divided theology into three branches dogmatic, moral and—"above them but based on them"—spiritual" (Wakefield 1983, 361). Likewise, Pierre Pourrat's four-volumes work *La spiritualité chrétienne* which was published from 1921 to 1930 was a strong incentive for further theological research on Christian spirituality (Waaijman 2002, 406). Since then the word spirituality has been gradually becoming more and more familiar to Christian theologians among both Catholics and Protestants.

Research on the idea of Christian spirituality reflects that major historical changes would have significant changes to the idea of spirituality. Among others, Christian Duquoc has studied how the idea of spirituality has grown since the French Revolution to the modern era. He concluded that spirituality has always been used in relation to the social world. Despite being experienced individually, spirituality exists as a religious experience produced by a

⁴ "But he who joins himself to the Lord becomes spiritually one with Him" (1 Cor 6:17).

⁵ "But it was to us that God made known his secret by means of his Spirit. The Spirit searches everything, even the hidden depths of God's purposes" (1 Cor 2:10).

⁶ "That's why only someone who has God's Spirit can understand spiritual blessings. Anyone who doesn't have God's Spirit thinks these blessings are foolish. People who are guided by the Spirit can make all kinds of judgments, but they cannot be judged by others" (1 Cor 2:14-15; cf. Rom 8:6 and Rev 11:2).

surrounding social process. Spirituality is not only a private religious experience but also a public phenomenon:

Despite the principle that Christian faith could not be separated from public practice, the division between private and public in Christianity after the French Revolution, that is, between the individual striving to reach perfection "as individual" and the Church as a social body striving to obtain a privileged position from Governments, tended to deprive Christianity as such of any real influence. . . . The private character assumed by faith was therefore determined by the public character attributed to institutional Christianity. (Duquoc 1971, 20)

Likewise, in his research on the history of Christian mission, M.C. Reilly has argued that spirituality is a particular method of living by faith. This particular method is always challenged by the fact that human life includes encountering other cultures and traditions from time to time. The particularity of human spirituality, therefore, is continuously in need of adaptation and accommodation in order to have significant roots in different cultures and traditions. In the history of Christian missions, this process of grounding a particular spirituality in a different cultural environment has always accompanied the process of evangelization. The universal message of Christianity is enveloped by a particular spirituality of people who bring the message to a new world, and who have to show its claim of validity in a way that can be recognized by the cultural framework of the indigenous people. In Reilly's words:

Christian spirituality is based upon a sevenfold scriptural foundation: faith and a change of heart, eschatology and an interpretation of the world and history, participation in the life of the Trinity, hope in the context of the paschal mystery of Christ, charity and service directed to God and man, prayer and the sacramental life, and some form of self-discipline and asceticism. However, these elements are historicized in the lives of men of different ages and places. They assume different forms and expressions according to different traditions, different theological insights, and different historical and cultural situations. A present-day spirituality for mission will be determined by the historical-cultural situation of today's world, by theology, especially by the missiology of the Church and mission, and by the tradition of mission spirituality in the Church. (Reilly 1976, 238)

Next to that, a scholar like Robert C. Roberts has demonstrated that spirituality is in fact a human experience of emotions, especially those that become concerns. Spiritual experience is a human experience of concerns, which is articulated by a religious language. Sometimes people forget that their spirituality is constructed by their way of seeing things; the taste of spiritual realm is in fact emotionally experienced, based on one's way of seeing things. The peak spiritual experiences such as hope, peace, and gratitude are experienced when those emotions have become an intense psychological concern. In Roberts' words:

. . . emotions are ways of "seeing" ourselves and our world that grow out of concerns of one sort or another. . . . The Christian emotions . . . are ways of "seeing" which are determined by the peculiar Christian concepts and the scheme of beliefs which give rise to those concepts. But all emotions are based on some concern or other, and the fruits of the Spirit such as hope and peace and gratitude are no different from other emotions in this respect. No one who lacks the concern which is basic to these emotions will ever have them. (Roberts 1982, 11)

Similarly, Urban Holmes's research illustrates how "Christian humanity throughout its history [has] understood what it is to seek God and to know him" (Holmes 1980, 3). The effort to seek God and to know him is the endeavour that is called spirituality. This effort becomes manifest historically in the phenomenology of prayer, which can be approached from the human sensual experience. When people pray, Holmes argues, there are at least four modes of human sensual experience: viz. apophatism, kataphatism, encratism, and quietism. The apophatic mode of prayer gives emotional warmth by which an individual human might

feel and believe that he or she is being touched by the divine. The kataphatic mode of prayer gives intellectual imagination by which an individual human might understand clearly about his or her experience of God. The encratic mode of prayer gives psychological confidence that God is taking control over one's individual life from his or her innermost being. The quiet mode of prayer gives plentiful meaning about the reality of divine being so that there would be no single word that might explain about the truthfulness of his or her experience of God. These aspects of the phenomenology of prayer, which perform the visible aspect of spirituality, are illustrated in a diagram below:

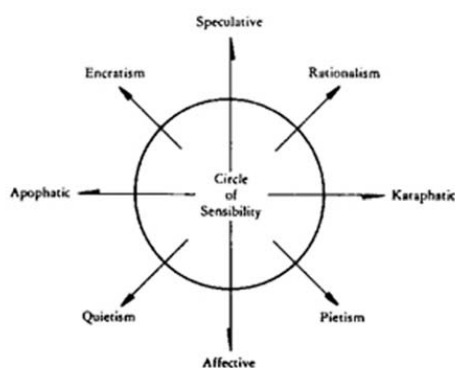


Figure 1. A Phenomenology of Prayer

Source: Data from Holmes 1980, 4.

Moreover, reflecting on the major changes created by the council of Vatican II, Aloysius Pieris has argued that the visible aspect of spirituality is not a static phenomenon (Pieris 1983, 139). It is a dynamics between threefold dimensions of spiritual praxis: viz. action, contemplation, and liturgy. As a community of believers in the world, the Church does not secure us from the danger of compartmentalization of the threefold dimension. If so, it would produce an unhealthy spirituality, as the authentic one is always constructed by those three dimensions simultaneously. In other words, a living spirituality cannot be developed only by solitary meditation and solemn liturgy, but also should find its living sources from the actual secular commitment in the social world.

Eventually, among scholars discussing the idea of spirituality, there is Sandra M. Schneiders who has argued that spirituality is not only a small topic scattered in diverse discussions of social sciences and theology but is also worth being accepted as a particular academic science in the higher education which studies “lived experience” (Schneiders 1989, 679). In her study of biblical theology, Schneiders has found that sacred scriptures are among significant sources for human spirituality, especially when they are read by using hermeneutics that produce transformative interpretation:

Transformative interpretation, the interpretation by which we appropriate the meaning of the text by a fusion of horizons with the world the text projects, is essentially an enterprise within the area of spirituality, that is, of the conscious effort toward life-integration through self-transcendence toward the horizon of ultimate value. It involves a radical personal engagement with what Gadamer calls the truth

claims of the text. Truth claims are not merely dogmatic propositions, assertions of fact, or deliverances of information but the presentation of reality that offers itself to us a way of being, as a possible increase or decrease of personal subjective reality. (Schneiders 1991, 174)

The transformative interpretation has influenced the study of biblical theology, by which people are coming back to the textual source of their faith in order to arrive at a life-integrating experience that is called spirituality. Schneiders says:

... the climate in the biblical academy is slowly shifting. For complex reasons that need not detain us here, both students and their teachers are realizing that studying this text as if it were devoid of contemporary religious significance and/or as if the challenge to the reader that such significance raises were not integral to the meaning of the text itself is to falsify rather than to interpret the text. Furthermore the intense search for personal meaning and specifically for life-integrating spirituality that has been a marked characteristic of the second half of the twentieth century has led many Christians back to the Bible with an explicit hope for transforming engagement with this foundational text of their faith. (Schneiders 2003, 3)

People look at their religious texts in order to have a more life-integrating spirituality. The history of Christianity reveals the struggle of that effort, which sometimes is marked by confusion. Previously, there was a strong need of ecclesial authority to guarantee the authenticity of the divine revelation behind the sacred scriptures. Subsequently, however, the ecclesial authority was challenged with the growth of confidence in human rationality. This challenge has been continued until the present day discovery that makes people aware of the limitations of human rationality and scientific knowledge. Beyond the language of scientific knowledge, there is a world of metaphor that needs aesthetical approach especially when it comes to the interpretation of faith experienced by human beings.

With the Renaissance were born the quest for objectivity in the modern sense of the word and the profound suspicion of authority that would culminate in the scientific revolution and the Enlightenment. The immediacy of participation in an interpretive tradition was shattered. Scientific method became the sole guide of scholarly investigation, and mathematical exactitude and certitude the ideals of all knowledge worthy of the name. In such an intellectual climate the spiritual exegesis of the patristic and medieval scholars could only appear accidentally insightful at best and frivolously imaginative at worst.

In the late twentieth century, with the discovery of serious limitations of scientific method in the humanistic sphere, the rediscovery of the power of symbolism and the ubiquity of metaphorical thinking and language, the development of a more adequate understanding of the constitutive function of imagination, and the raising of questions of language and interpretation in every field of investigation, a new appreciation of ancient biblical exegesis is also emerging. There can be no question of a simple return to the methods or conclusions of the patristic and medieval exegetes (although some of it looks much more credible than it did a century ago!). Historical criticism is an indispensable component of any responsible biblical interpretation and precludes the possibility of a scientifically responsible precritical approach to the texts. But postcritical interpretation, characterized by what Paul Ricoeur has called "the second naïveté," will no doubt involve an aesthetic appreciation and spiritual sensitivity that have long been almost absent from the world of biblical scholarship. (Schneiders 1986, 19)

The object of a metaphor is everything in human experience that stimulates existential concern, such as religious commitment towards the love of God. In Paul Tillich's words, this existential concern is called the "ultimate concern" (Tillich 1951, 12). The scope of the ultimate concern is as wide as the human universe of experience. The need of life-integrating spirituality articulated metaphorically in religious language is not only for the religious people, who willingly abandoned the secular life in order to become fully involved in the spiritual journey of searching the Kingdom of God. This need is also for the common people, who are still committed to the secular world but who want to deal seriously with the human quest for the ultimate concern. In other words, the quest for spirituality is not only for the

religious community, organized by an institutional religion, but for all who want to shape their lives with a serious dedication to the Creator of life.

Therefore, the phenomenon of Western spirituality reveals that human beings can live without religion but not without faith. They might be secularized atheists having no religion, but still they must have a particular kind of spirituality conveying their ultimate values of life. In this sense, spirituality is the phenomenon of the human effort to express their most adorable values of life. Spirituality is the expression of human ultimate concern, so to speak.

Likewise, the object of spirituality can be defined precisely. The object of spirituality is not only the faculty of religion but also the non-religious aspects of human life that deal with ultimate concern. In this position, the academic study of spirituality has a specific object and particular research methodology. Its object is the human ultimate concern, and its research methodology is hermeneutical. It involves hermeneutics to the classical texts, historical phenomena, and human experiences that reveal the human struggle of dealing with ultimate concern. The methodology of that study is essentially interpretive: *viz.* to make significant interpretations to the classical texts, historical phenomena, and human experiences that have become the vehicle of human appropriation to the ultimate concern. That kind of methodology is what might be called hermeneutics. As an academic study, in its effort to interpret the substantial meanings of human ultimate concern, spirituality should deal with hermeneutics. This is pronounced by Sandra Schneiders as follows:

The approach which seems to me the most adequate to the object of the discipline of spirituality is the hermeneutical approach. By this I emphatically do not mean the application of some particular hermeneutical theory, e.g., that of Paul Ricoeur, to the subject of spirituality. Nor do I mean the prosecution of some particular hermeneutical agenda, e.g., feminist or deconstructionist hermeneutics, in regard to the subject matter. Rather, I mean that the primary aim of the discipline of spirituality as I understand it, is to understand the phenomena of the Christian spiritual life as experience. And since understanding of such phenomena is a function of interpretation, the presiding intellectual instrumentality is hermeneutics understood as an articulated and explicit interpretational strategy. The project of interpretation, as I have already suggested, is interdisciplinary because of the complex and multifaceted character of spiritual experience as such. (Schneiders 2005, 56)

As a conclusion for this section, it can be said that spirituality is the expression of the human ultimate concern that can be studied by using a hermeneutical methodology. The ultimate concern can include both formative-individual aspects (such as ascetics, prayer, piety, devotion, and charity) and integrative-social aspects (such as worship, ministry, communication, and service to the world).

Spirituality and Hermeneutics

As a constitutive component of the idea of spirituality we have to deal with the phenomenon of human interpretation. Our existence is always an interpreted existence. In hermeneutics we encounter the philosophical discourse that deals with the problem of interpretation. Any human enterprise that deals with the problem of interpretation could be called upon by the name: it is a part of hermeneutics. Since there is no single interpretation that might be valid anywhere and anyplace, there would be no single hermeneutic; the discourse of hermeneutics is always through multi-perspectives and plural.

The plurality of hermeneutics is illustrated by Ormiston and Schrift in their work which presents the history of philosophical theory of interpretation from the nineteenth century to the modern days (Ormiston and Schrift 1990). It is beyond the scope of this chapter to present all the theories of interpretation. Our purpose here is only to give a slight introduction about

hermeneutics and their relationship to the study of spirituality. In this case, we chose several figures as samples of scholars who think about theory of interpretation. These figures are Paul Ricoeur, Clifford Geertz, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Karl-Otto Apel, and Jürgen Habermas.

Paul Ricoeur is a significant philosopher in the current field of hermeneutics.⁷ He started his philosophical work by studying the power of the human will, which can claim its authority to being the source of the truth in a conflicting environment. Then, he changed his attention to the reality of language by which the truth is conveyed in the praxis of communication. After that, he went further by looking into the delicate elements of language—i.e. subjective intention, symbols, and metaphors—which are the dynamic vehicles of meaning. At this phase, he dealt with the issue of hermeneutics to be the dynamic praxis involving the process of pre-figuration, con-figuration, and post-figuration (Ricoeur 1995, 93-107). The meaning of the text is achieved by the subject in relation to his capacity to dwell in the message. That means that the subject makes several changes in order that he or she will be able to dwell in the message, otherwise he or she would never be able to understand the message. This phenomenon of changing subject is the one that makes hermeneutics become dynamic, polemical, and full of conflict; because, the state of the same text would be dissimilar in different subjects.

Besides Ricoeur, there is the anthropologist Clifford Geertz who also thinks about the philosophy of interpretation. Instead of using the term hermeneutics, he put forward the praxis of interpretation by the name of the adjective ‘interpretive’; in his field of study he would call his hermeneutical research an interpretive theory of anthropology. The object of the research is not only a physical text but also a human event, such as moral imagination, that could be found only in the process of translation producing understanding and empathy. The aim of the process of interpretation is not to get the most fundamental answer but to be in mutual communication with other human-life interpreters:

The essential vocation of interpretive anthropology is not to answer our deepest questions, but to make available to us answers that others . . . have given, and thus to include them in the consultable record of what man has said. (Geertz 1973, 30)

Furthermore, in the discourse on hermeneutics, the name of Hans-Georg Gadamer is worth noting. He said that the truth is revealed to the human in the process of thinking. The purpose of thinking is to create understanding through the process of interpreting data. In this process, Gadamer found that there is always a precondition for thinking. The precondition is what might be called prejudice; the prejudices are the conditions of understanding (Gadamer 1975, 235-242). It is the starting point of “the hermeneutical circle,” in which the process of thinking circulates from the prejudices through critical analysis to the conclusion that would become a new prejudice. In history, the hermeneutical circle has produced the existence of tradition that becomes the source of prejudice in the process of creating understanding, and the tradition exists in the social network of which one becomes a member:

The circle . . . is not formal in nature, it is neither subjective nor objective, but describes understanding as the interplay of the movement of tradition and the movement of the interpreter. The anticipation of meaning that governs our understanding of a text is not an act of subjectivity, but proceeds from the communality that binds us to the tradition. But this is contained in our relation to tradition, in the constant process of education. Tradition is not simply a precondition into which we come, but we produce it ourselves, inasmuch as we understand, participate in the evolution of tradition and hence

⁷Ricoeur’s work is dedicated to the philosophy of interpretation or hermeneutics. See: Ricoeur and Pellauer 2013; Ricoeur 1965b, 1965a, 1966, 1967; MacIntyre and Ricoeur 1969; Ricoeur 1970, 1974, 1976, 1979, 1981a, 1981b, 1984, 1985, 1988, 1992, 1995, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2003.

further determine it ourselves. Thus the circle of understanding is not a 'methodological' circle, but describes an ontological structural element in understanding. (Gadamer 1975, 261)

In the hermeneutical circle, human beings try to understand their life either as individual thinkers or as an interpretive society. In the search for understanding, there are potentials for either further achievement or distraction and error. In this case, Karl-Otto Apel argued that, in the process of thinking, it is important to go beyond any given prejudice in order to arrive at the understanding. To go beyond the prejudice, one should recognize the playing rule of that prejudice which is called the language game:

But what can we say positively about the meaning of the so-called intentional expressions, if we cannot even assume that they 'denote some-thing'? At this point we should recall the basic theme of the philosophy of language analysis as it was originated by Wittgenstein. In the *Tractatus* the function of intentional expressions like 'to mean' was taken as something which could not itself be 'meant', i.e. which could not be 'denoted', the function of these expressions was considered to be identical with the function of language in general: namely to mean or to denote something. The function of 'to mean', according to the early Wittgenstein, "shows itself" in the function of language. In the *Philosophical Investigations* the solution of this problem is not so very different—as far as we can talk about 'solutions of problems' in the philosophy of the later Wittgenstein. The difference, however, is that now the model of "Logical Atomism" no longer determines how the functioning of language is to be understood—and this means in general that the traditional model of language since Aristotle has been likewise abandoned: namely the idea that the word symbols 'denote' objects, the former ones being elements of descriptive sentences, the latter ones of facts. Instead of this model—which was prejudiced, in the last analysis, by the concept of "theoria" as a philosophical state of mind—the later Wittgenstein introduced as a new key concept, the "language game", or rather "the language games". (Apel 1967, 36-37)

The next problem coming from this position is the question: how can people coming from different language games mutually understand each other? The answer is that there is a transcendental process by which a thinker goes beyond his or her own language game in order to place himself or herself in the language game of his or her partner of speaking. To analyze this phenomenon, Apel differentiates between syntactics, semantics, and pragmatics: "Syntactics deals with the relationships between signs (...). Semantics deals with the relationship of signs to extra-linguistic objects or states of affairs, which are represented by signs. (...) Finally, pragmatics deals with the relationship between signs and their users, human beings" (Apel 1980, 94). The phenomenon of transcendental process in the philosophy of interpretation comes from the pragmatics aspect of creating understanding.

One should make a critical reflection and try to grasp what Apel has called a "transcendental" level of thought. In the pursuing of understanding, there are given prejudices, subconscious drives, as well as both natural and social law which dominate the thinking subject; these aspects are grounded in a particular language game. In order to understand the representation of thought that comes from a different language game, a thinker should transcend his or her own universe. He or she should be able to place him/her-self into the unlimited language game by which all people can communicate and understand each other. This unlimited language game is called "the communication community," as Apel says:

In my opinion, a modern transcendental philosophy is primarily concerned with reflection upon the meaning—and thus also upon the implications of the meaning—of argument as such. This is manifestly what is ultimate and irreducible for all who argue—no matter what their position. For by arguing—and this means even in the light of any doubt however radical, which, as doubt, should have a meaning—they have established for themselves and implicitly recognized both the transcendental presuppositions of epistemology and the theory of science in terms of the transcendental language game of an unlimited communication community. (Apel 1980, 138)

In the real world, however, the idea of “an unlimited communication community” never exists without a particular body. The language games are manifest in what Jürgen Habermas has called either the life-world or the system of human communication. The life-world is the body of a communication community by which an acting subject becomes an inseparable part of the society. The system is the body of the communication community by which an acting subject might have a distance from the society. In Habermas’ words:

In one case, the integration of an action system is established by a normatively secured or communicatively achieved consensus, in the other case, by a nonnormative regulation of individual decisions that extends beyond the actors’ consciousness. This distinction between a social integration of society, which takes effect in action orientation, and a systemic integration, which reaches through and beyond action orientations, calls for a corresponding differentiation in the concept of society itself. . . . society is conceived from the perspective of acting subjects as the life-world of a social group. In contrast, from the observer’s perspective of someone not involved, society can be conceived only as a system of actions such that each action has a functional significance according to its contribution to the maintenance of the system. (Habermas 1987, 117)

In the *life-world*, a subject becomes a communicative actor who is always “moving within the horizon of his/her life-world,” he or she cannot step outside it (Habermas 1987, 126). Becoming an interpreter, he or she cannot refer to “‘something in the world’ in the same way as they can do to facts, norms, or experiences” (Habermas 1987, 126). In this sense, he or she can properly interpret an incomplete sentence or a special gesture that cannot be understood by the outsider. He or she becomes a communicative actor by heart so to speak. In the *system* he or she will have an objective reference with its particular requirements; he or she will have a written law of interpretation, according to “the system” of social integration in which he or she takes part. In this sense, he or she becomes a communicative actor by brain so to speak. Both life-world and system are not different orders of social phenomena, but the two inseparable hermeneutical perspectives comprising the social world of communication (Habermas 1987, 155).

Sometimes however, the life-world and the system of social integration cannot easily match with each other, e.g. in the relationship between tribal society and modern administration. A mediating tool is needed by which the life-world is converted into a reasonable part or a system of social integration. If this happens, there will be a colonization of the life-world: “the mediatization of the life-world assumes the form of a colonization” (Habermas 1987, 196). If this is the case, the substrate of human communication would become un-natural, producing bias and inaccuracy. The birth of mutual understanding would be blocked, in this case, and the subjects of communication should search for a creative way to liberate their thinking, interpretation, and communication.

Habermas saw that, in human communication, there are many substrates that produce different kinds of perspectives; these substrates are the subjective-personal contemplation, the inter-subjective engagement, and the objective standard of reality; and these substrates could be illustrated as follows:

Rationalization Complexes				
Worlds Basic Attitudes	1 Objective	2 Social	3 Subjective	1 Objective
3 Expressive	Art ↓			
1 Objectivating	↑ Cognitive-instrumental rationality Science Technology	↑ Social technologies	X	
2 Norm-conformative	X	↑ Moral-practical rationality Law	↓ Morality	
3 Expressive		X	↑ Aesthetic-practical rationality Eroticism Art	

Figure 2. Substrates of Rationalization

Source: Data from Habermas 1984, 283.

These different substrates and perspectives then create at least three distinctive rationalizations: i.e. instrumental, moral, and aesthetical. Despite their own domain, they are interchangeably dynamics in the human communication. Sometimes, in a place where one should communicate with instrumental rationalization, one uses the moral or aesthetical instead, so that there would be a discord resulted from misunderstanding. This implies that there are many substrates and perspectives interplaying in the hermeneutical endeavour.

The above theories about the philosophy of interpretation and communication are presented to illustrate that the method of hermeneutics is a promising methodology to cultivate the academic study about human spirituality. It indicates that the scope of the phenomenon of spirituality is as broad as the horizon of human life. It would include any human dimension that might deal with interpretation and communication on the phenomena of spirituality.

The complexity of the study of spirituality has been carefully studied by Philip Sheldrake who offered several reminding points.

Firstly, in the discourse of spirituality, the concern for human interiority should be accompanied by the social dimension of the human life:

The Christian life is not merely concerned with interiority or 'spiritual' matters but involves all the elements of our experience. We should not be concerned merely with our individual growth but with the communal and social dimensions of our existence. (Sheldrake 1987, 1)

Secondly, although sometimes the discourse of spirituality contains theological ideas about the divine world, the idea of spirituality should be grounded on historical perspectives. These would provide a careful analysis of the historical context of spiritual values embodied in a particular tradition. Spiritualities do not exist on some ideal plane outside the limitations of history. The origins and development of spiritual traditions reflect the specific circumstances of time and place as well as the psychological state of the people involved. They consequently embody values that are socially conditioned (Sheldrake 2005c, 39).

Thirdly, although the discourse of spirituality should be grounded on historical perspectives, it is essentially a discourse about the human quest for holiness. It is a discourse about the human inner struggle for achieving perfection. It includes not only history but also the human reality of love, based on the dynamics of desires lying beneath both individual and communal consciousness.

Conventional images of holiness do not encourage us to befriend our desires. Indeed, they usually suggest that saints, if they ever showed signs of having personal desires at all, soon lose them in some overwhelming conversion experience. . . . To my mind, desire is intimately associated with our capacity to love truly—ourselves, other people, God and even more abstract things such as ideals or causes. Love . . . is not simply a matter of immediate feelings. There may be times, even in the most intense love commitments, when tangible feelings are absent. But love ultimately proves itself in its focused attention and its quality of dedication, which is richer and deeper than mere duty or will power. It is perhaps what St. Augustine means by "intention" and the author of the English medieval text *The Cloud of Unknowing*, by "naked intent." (Sheldrake 1994, 10)

Fourthly, in the discourse of spirituality, the dialectical relationship between opposite realities of human experience is revealed in mystical and prophetic experiences by which the human interiority is always intertwined with its exteriority. It is impossible for human beings to see God in their personal lives without seeing the divine externally in their social world. In the Christian theology, the link between interiority and exteriority of human spirituality is symbolized in the theological concept of the Trinity lying behind the incarnation of God among human beings:

It is important . . . to recall the intimate link between Christian discipleship, including the association between public, social life and human identity, and Trinitarian theology. The core of the Christian life is to be united with God in Jesus Christ through a Spirit-led communion with one another. God's own relational nature is fundamental to this life. God is persons-in-communion, a mutuality of self-giving love. Communion underpins existence. Nothing is without communion, including human life For this reason, the biblical notions of mission and discipleship are at the core of the Christian life and are vitally important as we reflect on the public, social nature of spirituality. (Sheldrake 2003, 26)

Fifthly, in the study of spirituality, the classics of humanities become an important source for hermeneutics, which might be of help in the process of collecting information and forming transformative appropriation. By the method of hermeneutics, the study of spirituality does not only deal with information from the classical texts but with the researcher's response to that information. This will make the study of spirituality become not only informative but transformative.

... the study of spirituality is self-implicating, it is not only informative but also transformative. When we approach particular tradition or texts we clearly seek information. This includes historical data, textual analysis, an understanding of theological frameworks and a determination of the kind of spiritual practice being represented. However, beyond information lies a quest for the 'truth' or wisdom embodied in a

tradition or text and how this may be accessed. This confronts us with the questions 'what difference does this make?' and 'what could or should our response be?' This transformative dimension of the study of spirituality involves judgment (this makes sense, is important and of value) and appropriation (we seek to make this wisdom our own). (Sheldrake 2005b, 13)

Hermeneutical methodology moves the study of spirituality beyond matters of content toward a quest for wisdom to live by, rather than technical information held at a distance. . . . What distinguishes the discipline of Christian spirituality in its fullest sense is that it is not only informative but transformative. (Sheldrake 2006, 23)

Sixthly, the idea of spirituality discloses the human struggle to locate the sacred realm which is believed to be the vehicle of divine-human encountering; this struggle reveals contrasts—between the idea of the sacred and of the profane—in how human beings see and experience their spiritual life in the daily-secular world.

Why does sacred space remain important in today's plural and increasingly nonreligious cities? Equally, what difference does an idea of "the sacred" make to city life? The answer, I believe, is that it encapsulates a vision of ultimate value in human existence—an "interpreted cosmos," if you like. By introducing a critical note of otherness (whether the human other of the divine Other), "the sacred" grounds what is centrally important about existence in something more than mere self enhancement. We need symbolic spaces and structures in the modern city that, like the great churches of a previous age, speak to us of "the condition of the world" and consequently free us from a sense of fundamental estrangement. (Sheldrake 2010)

Finally, seventhly, in the study of spirituality, the transformative aspect of spirituality is not only an informative science but also operative wisdom⁸ which is the capacity of making discernment to taste, to judge, and to critically evaluate the actual experience in regard to the ultimate values. The vehicle of that operative wisdom is imagination, which might give space to "the alternative ways of knowing" (Sheldrake 2005a, 212). By using images, rather than theological propositions, imagination might transcend a "one-dimensional understanding of the real." It would include not only the substance of theological arguments but also the spiritual integrity of the arguing theologian: ". . . those who practice theology professionally must treat with greater seriousness the implicit theology of the devotees expressed through art, poetry and contemplation" (Sheldrake 2005a, 213). At this point, we might conclude that the transformative aspect of spirituality is rooted in the capacity of a theologian to make spiritual discernment, which is done not only by using intellectual arguments but also spiritual imagination working in his or her mind. This spiritual imagination is formed in the spiritual praxis of one's life which is integrating all aspects of his or her life even beyond one's religious tradition.⁹ Being spiritual for one's life, this imagination is rooted in one's

⁸Wisdom is the operative aspect of spirituality; it could be illustrated as the idea of *phronesis* which has been discussed a long time ago by Plato and Aristotle." While Plato believed that the intellect needed to be protected from the emotional, sensuous and material aspects of life, Aristotle's *phronesis* and Christian discernment suggest that practical wisdom arises not from abstraction but from whole-hearted engagement with existential realities. This suggests that participation and evaluation, immersion and detachment, should not be seen as competing but rather as complementary in the quest for truth. Discernment and *phronesis* suggest that value of knowledge is always in terms of more than dispassionate information held at a distance. While knowledge is clearly deepened by the application of historical, philosophical, social scientific, or hermeneutical methods, its ultimate concern is with some kind of enhancement of human existence."(Sheldrake 2007, 97)

⁹For the example that the edification of spirituality by human imagination could be done beyond one's religious tradition, we can see "a particular legacy of the Catholic spirituality, namely the *Spiritual Exercises* from Ignatius of Loyola, which has been used by many people from different religions and religious traditions: "The situation of Ignatian spirituality has changed radically in three important ways since the Second Vatican Council. First of all, exposure to the tradition, especially the *Spiritual Exercises*, has extended beyond religious communities and, most strikingly, beyond the Roman Catholic Church. Secondly, the presentation of the Exercises, particularly in the English-speaking countries, has recovered its flexibility and concentrated more on

subconscious awareness and becomes the driven-force of his cognitive activity. In this way of thinking, the contemplative dimension—which is recognized as spirituality and is constructed by imagination—is subverting the cognitive dimension of theology.

I suggested earlier that spirituality also reinforces or subverts certain understandings and uses of theology. This is nowhere more apparent than in our approach to knowledge. The emphasis on the experiential in spirituality has tended to reinforce a sense that spirituality has nothing to do with the intellect and is a dimension of Christian life that is fundamentally detached from "doing theology." This presupposes that spirituality is concerned purely with subjectivity, emotions or psychological states rather than with the mind, with judgement or with the quality of our presence and action in the world. Conversely it suggests that theology is purely theoretical and has nothing to do with ways of life. Spirituality is not simply concerned with experience but embodies a viewpoint (theory), commitments (ethics), and practices (not simply devotional practices but action in the world). (Sheldrake 2007, 96)

Regarding that complexity, Kees Waaijman has contributed a broad description about the development of the discourse of spirituality (Waaijman 2002). He saw that *spirituality is a compound of discourse about the human experience of faith, ranging from a simple conversation about experienced-faith to what nowadays has become an inter-disciplinary study designated to be the science of spirituality*. The discourse on spirituality could be classified by looking at its forms, objects/foundations of research, and research methodology. By looking at its forms, there are at least three kinds of discourse on spirituality, i.e. spirituality as lay movements, as scholastic/humanistic movements, and as counter-movements toward a dominating structure. Likewise, by looking at its objects/foundations of research, there are spiritualities regarding: praxis, speculative reflection, divine-human transformation, discernment, and academic discipline of science. Eventually, by looking at its research methodology, there are no less than four kinds of research on the science of spirituality: i.e., descriptive, hermeneutic, systematic, and mystagogic—meaning to the enhancement of human integrity and its relation to their mystical or existential experience—researches on spirituality. What Kees Waaijman tried to point out is that the discourse on spirituality is a compound of complexities regarding the phenomena of faith-lived experience in the human life.

Towards a Definition of Reformed Spirituality

After this intermezzo we are now ready to deal with the main task of this chapter, namely, how to make a definition that might be the coordinating principle for our research. What is the definition of Reformed spirituality?

Well-known scholars in the field of Christian spirituality—such as Sheldrake, Schneiders, and Waaijman—have shown us the complexity of the discourse. Their interpretations do rather increase the number of complexities than decrease. The idea of spirituality is everything about human beings articulating their experience of faith by using religious language and tradition. It includes a very broad area of study dealing with hermeneutics and communication.

For the sake of discussion about the human experience of God in the world, which is the essential matter of the discourse on Reformed spirituality, we have to narrow down our scope and to focus on four interpenetrating dimensions which are characteristic for every form of

the individual retreatant than on the group. Finally, the main focus of Ignatian spirituality has become practical and experiential rather than theoretical.” (Sheldrake 1991a, 1)

spirituality but which receive a special flavor in the Reformed tradition. The four general dimensions of spirituality are: *the ground, the media, the action, and the human existential subject*. Applied to Reformed spirituality we can recognize the following dimensions: The first dimension is about the existence of the church (the ground); the second is of the sacraments (the media); the third of the ministry (the action) and the fourth of piety (the human existential subject). In particular, these four interpenetrating dimensions can be discussed as constitutive components of Reformed spirituality.

In our discussion we will keep in mind all the aspects of spirituality mentioned by Philip Sheldrake in the former chapter like its emphasis upon the effort to combine interiority and social life (1), upon the importance of historical perspectives (2), upon holiness (3), upon the integration of mystical and prophetic aspects (4), upon the significance of the creative digestion of the classics of humanity (5), upon the way how to deal with the contrast between the profane and the sacred (6) in order to come to a operative wisdom (7). These seven aspects are not strict criteria to be applied to what we intend to describe as Reformed spirituality in Java. They play rather the role of reminders in order to keep in mind the broad character and the many complexities of the concept of spirituality.

Regarding the discussion dealt with above, we may say that Reformed spirituality was essentially (although not exclusively) Calvin's theology, which has been developed by the Calvinist tradition, regarding the idea of Christian life. It deals with the question of how Christians must live in a challenging world that gives them the opportunity either to stumble into sinfulness or to stand erect under the Gospel of Christ. When they stand under the Gospel of Christ, they will experience both justification and sanctification, manifesting their ethical edification. That kind of opportunity reveals religious experience by which human beings encounter the reality of the divine presence in the world. In Calvin's theology, the validity of that divine-human encounter relies on the activity of the Holy Spirit, so that from the human side it will always be referential, pointing to something else like symbols do. This symbolical presence of divinity in the world of human beings is encapsulated into at least three theological loci: the church, the sacraments, and the ecclesiastical ministry. As the instruments of the Holy Spirit, their functions reveal the irresistible sovereignty of the divine glory; yet, as the symbolical tool of the human world, they cannot effectively function without human appropriation toward their intrinsic meaning. Therefore, the catechetical process on piety (Christian life) is imperative; and the existence of a catechism is extremely important for the Reformed spirituality. In the next chapter, we will deal with the issue of those three *loci theologici* and after that—in chapter three and four—we will discuss the struggle for a catechism that might develop Reformed spirituality in Java.

Chapter 2

The Characteristics of Reformed Spirituality

In any endeavor to articulate the main features of a confessional tradition, one is immediately confronted with a great number of methodological questions. Which features are the most important and normative ones: the historical or the current? And what are the main features of a tradition? Who decides here? Especially in relation to the Reformed tradition this is an extremely complex question, because the Reformed churches do not recognize any supra-national doctrinal authority. Every national church has its own confession. That implies that every list of Reformed features is always based on the confessions recognized in the church of the author of this list. It is virtually impossible to find exactly identical enumerations of the central features of the Reformed tradition. And even if that would be the case, then the question returns: on which period is this list based? On the constitutive period out of the Reformation time, on the confessional heydays of the nineteenth and twentieth century or on the current situation? In this study is – like many authors on Reformed spirituality did – opted for a mix of historical and current viewpoints. In our effort to understand the nature of Reformed spirituality, we are inclined to consider six points as central aspects of Reformed spirituality.

Firstly, it believes that the Christian faith has to be declared in a public confession. This is a tradition which was anchored in the sixteenth-century Reformation when people dedicated their existence to what they actually believed. Declaring faith publicly was a proclamation of the church in the society, and claiming its right to exist, not from the sovereign or the ruling power, but only from the divine providence. This tradition has deep roots in the early phase of Christianity, when the disciples of Jesus publicly declared their faith in the Messianic existence of their teacher and when the Constantine church formulated its apostolic creed. Following this tradition, the Reformed churches issued their confessions such as the Second Helvetic Confession, the Belgic Confession, and the Heidelberg Catechism publicly and considered them not only of importance for church life but also for public life. Reformed theology is public theology. (Rogers 1992, 57).

Secondly, Reformed spirituality is characterized by a strong emphasis upon the unbreakable relationship between human beings and their Creator in terms of the covenant that should be maintained by the obedient believer. This has been illustrated by Peter Golding by saying: “... the idea of the covenant is the principle in terms of which the saving relations of God to men are organized” (Golding 2004, 9). As a covenant, the divine-human relationship is to be maintained by an active faith confession revealed not only in the liturgy and devotion but also in the moral and social life.

Thirdly, in order to reveal the covenantal faith, the Reformed spirituality is also characterized by edification. It is to maintain a progress toward mature Christian life, which has been illustrated by John Leith as the nine characteristics of John Calvin’s piety. These include – as already mentioned in chapter I – the pursuing of the glory of God, of true religion characterized by anti-idolatry, of divine purpose in history, of living in holiness, of rationality for the service of God, of the ministry of the Word, of pastoral care, of discipline for the administration of the sacraments, and of the simplicity of religious life (Leith 1992, 5-18). These characteristics are to be the ongoing process of spiritual growth which is recognized in terms of sanctification. Theologically speaking, sanctification springs from the hidden activity of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believers. This, however, does not point to the

passive mode of human effort, but on the contrary, it points to the responsibility of man to maintain his growth in spiritual matter. Since God has always been working in the depth of human existence presenting his gracious justification, every individual believer has a fundamental obligation to improve his/her quality of existence in order to glorify the reign of God in his/her life.

Nevertheless, the doctrine of sanctification could easily lead toward a spiritual legalism. Concerning this matter John Leith has noted: “the traditional Reformed emphasis on sanctification contributed not simply to well-known Reformed virtues but also to well-known problems” (Leith 1993, 191). The principle of on-going formation has tended toward a religious legalism forgetting the secret of election behind the spiritual fact of justification that always lies beyond the existence of faith. It subsequently might create hypocrisy and a sense of self-righteousness which would be in opposition of the Reformed spirituality. Therefore, John Leith carefully remarks that the Reformed Christians “at their best have always been aware that on every new level of goodness a new form of evil appears” (Leith 1993, 193), implying a never ending battle for the Christians who dedicated themselves to glorify the reign of God in the world.

Regarding the danger of spiritual legalism in the Reformed spirituality, Jack Rogers has noted that there are two tendencies in the history of Protestant scholasticism (Rogers 1992, 57). The first one is that theology has become more and more abstract and speculative, whereas for the practicality of Reformed spirituality it needs to be operational. The second tendency is that the Reformed theologians tend to forget one of the Calvin’s most important theological tenets, namely, the principle of God’s accommodation. This principle points to the fact that the human being would never be able to achieve any spiritual merit, if God would not accommodate himself to be found by his people. This principle implies that believers should focus their energy on the area of life being manageable for them, and they should not follow their curiosity to solve the area of mystery.

Fourthly, Reformed spirituality is also characterized by a belief that within the existence of divine providence the local church is the most concrete ecclesiastical realm for the believer so that its authority should be recognized: “The Reformed confessions were formulated by individual churches in their different situations and subsequently acquired a certain authority beyond their place of origin” (Brinkman 1999b, 154). No matter how weak its condition, a local church is to be honoured as a potential manifestation of the Kingdom of Christ among his people. It helps the people of God to live according to their context, and it helps them to have a concrete relevance of their faith.

However, if a local church is isolated from communion with other churches, it will shrink into a sectarian movement and lose its genuine quality as a true Reformed church. Because, in communion with other churches, there is an on-going conversation facilitating a local church to access the deeper layer of Christian tradition. In the communion with the other churches, there is a never ending approach towards the universal truth of Jesus Christ. This is reflected by Martien Brinkman who describes the inter-relatedness between local and universal confessions of faith in the Reformed tradition: “the Reformed tradition is pre-eminently a tradition in which the formulation of faith that is very much a product of time and place, has acquired a legitimate place, but in which, nevertheless, the pretension to formulate contextually the universal truth in Jesus Christ was upheld continuously” (Brinkman 1996a, 114).

Fifthly, the Reformed spirituality is shaped by the awareness among the local churches that they should not be alone in their maintaining the ecclesiastical life. Every local church should be in ecumenical relationship with her sister churches. In this relationship, the dynamic tension between the existence of local churches and of the universal church becomes the vitality of the Reformed tradition (Pasztor 1999, 38). So, there need not to be a sharp contrast between the contextuality that is characteristic for the Reformed tradition with its emphasis on confessing in loco et in tempore and the catholic claim of its confessions.

There is a manifold of church administrations and even faith confessions in the Reformed tradition (Brinkman 1999b, 154). Some of them have strong connections with the classical Reformed confessions such as the Second Helvetic Confession, the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Articles of Dort from 1619. Yet, some others do not have any knowledge of those classical confessions in the Reformed tradition. Even so, these churches are – at least within the World Communion of Reformed Churches – also recognized as members of the Reformed tradition.

This peculiarity is due to the fact that Reformed spirituality has received a theological legacy in their commitment to the catholicity of the church as it is stated in the apostolic creed. The sixteenth-century Reformation stated that the catholicity of the church is not *mutatis mutandis* the papal realm of the Roman Catholic Church, since the true church is to be found not on earth but in heaven, yet truly present in the activity of the Holy Spirit. In this sense, Reformed spirituality is committed to unity among churches and refusing the idea of church segregation that could imply schisms or heresies: “In the introduction of the Second Helvetic Confession, it is emphasized that the representatives of the churches who signed the confession have nothing to do with schisms or heresies” (Pasztor 1999, 24). There is, therefore, a continuous strive for unity, not considered as uniformity, but as unity in diversity.

Finally, sixthly, the Reformed spirituality is characterized by a strong commitment toward the social construction of a society. It means that the Reformed theology does not promote a Christian life separated from the daily business in society. What the church has to do is fundamentally what the secular government has to do, namely, to create justice and order.¹⁰ This is indicated by the sense of what Elsie McKee has called “laicizing the world” (McKee 1989, 17).

In the above-mentioned characteristics of Reformed spirituality, one would realize that the debate regarding spirituality is immensely broad. The gravity of the debate is somehow revolving on the issues of inter-relationship between local and global church, between internal and external aspects of faith, and between the church and the world. They represent continuous struggle regarding how the external human endeavors are consistently related to the Scriptures and to the invisible work of the Holy Spirit?

Ecclesiological Dimension of the Reformed Spirituality

In the fourth book of the *Institutes*, John Calvin stated that salvation is always coming, not from the effort of man, but from the grace of God who has made the believers to be partakers of his eternal blessedness. What has already been started in the holiness of God, however, is

¹⁰ Opposed to the idea of radical orthodoxy which believes that there is no secularity since everything is essentially spiritual (Smith 2005, 16).

then manifested in the human life by the Holy Spirit who helps the believers to experience the visible reality of grace. To put it in other way, salvation is not just a hidden mystery but a living order in the human history wherein God is helping his people to experience his love. The living order is what has been named the church whose existence is necessary for the human salvation, as Calvin says: “Christ becomes ours and we are made partakers of the salvation and eternal blessedness brought by him. Since, however, in our ignorance and sloth . . . we need outward help to beget and increase faith within us, and advance it to its goal, God has also added these aids that he may provide for our weaknesses” (Inst. 4.1.1).

The living order likewise refers to both the visible and the invisible church. The visible church is the empirical reality of the believers’ community of faith; and the invisible church is the theological reality of the people that God has elected (Inst. 4.1.7). The Scripture illustrates the construction of the church in such offices as pastors and teachers (Ephesians 4:11) providing mutual leadership, holy agreement of faith, right order, and administration of the sacraments in which God becomes the Father and the church becomes the Mother of the believers (Inst. 4.1.4). Among the Reformed Christians, there is no spiritual hierarchy among the ecclesiastical offices. Every Christian has the same level in the church and the differences among them are only to serve the administration of the ecclesiastical life: there is an office of ministers for serving the Word and Sacrament, there is an office of deacons for organizing social charity, and there is an office of elders for organizing the sovereignty of the church. The three offices maintain a continuation of the three ancient ecclesiastical offices based on the biblical revelation, namely, the presbyter, the deacon, and the bishop. These ancient offices have been accepted as a reflection of Christ’s ecclesiastical dignities to be the king, the priest, and the shepherd of his people.

Calvin’s theological idea about the visible and invisible dimensions of the church has been developed further by Reformed theologians who tried to illustrate the dynamic function of the church. In this dynamism, the church has been described to be dialectics between two pairs such as external-internal, local-universal, contextual-historical, as well as christological-pneumatological phenomena. These dialectics represent the nature of the church as the living organism of the people of God, which always is in relation to the Trinitarian God.

The dialectics between the external and internal aspects of the church has been shown by David Little who believed that the history of the Reformed tradition has been characterized by conflicts between the authority of the state and of the church. This conflict has revealed the two forums of humanity, namely, “the external forum of civil authority” and “the internal forum of conscience” (Little 1992, 200). Both have been involved in the creation of human conscience, which is necessary for responding to the revelation of God, so that John Calvin has defended it to be the sovereignty of conscience over the law. The sovereignty of conscience likewise should be protected by the state and the church because it is always above the law: “human laws, whether made by magistrate or by church, even though they have to be observed . . . still do not of themselves bind the conscience” (Inst. 4.10.5).¹¹

¹¹ It seems that in Protestantism the doctrine of human consciousness has developed from the idea of justification. The idea of justification presupposes the human existence before the tribunal of God, which is technically called, *coram Deo* ‘in God’s presence’. In the Reformation’s era, the presupposition has become a theological tool to refuse the papal power and to create a greater space of freedom for the individual free will based on the evangelical teaching of justification. When an individual believer has been presented before God, then he or she will never recognize a human authority greater than the majesty of God; and this means that he or she will see the equality among human beings, as Brinkman says: “This means that we may put our willpower into effect in the area of works, but it does not make sense to speak of a free will before God. After all, before God we do not play the acting but the receiving role. But this does not create a strict demarcation of what is

The dialectic between local-universal subsequently has been shown by Martien Brinkman who said that the Reformed church's awareness of its being a form of the catholicity of the church will illustrate the eternal tension in its existence. On the one hand, it is a local church being present in time and space which are always uniquely particular. On the other hand, it is also part of the universal church which always has a general characteristic held by all churches in the world; it is a part of the *una sancta*, so to speak (Brinkman 1999a, 108).

Moreover, Brinkman also illustrated the dialectic between contextual-historical characters of the church as they have been involved in a hermeneutical struggle for years within the World Council of Churches regarding "the reception of the sacred books and the traditions" (Brinkman 1995, 46). In this struggle, the apostolic confession of faith has been treated as the common ground for the churches so that they might communicate with each other about the substance of their belief. This common ground has become the anchor point of the history of dogma, by which the churches understand their existence as the continuity of the apostolic tradition. In fact, the apostolic tradition is multi-faceted, but the apostolic faith has become foundational for the historical identity of the churches in the world. Therefore, the apostolic tradition should be understood as a dynamic reality revealed in the presence of Christ as confessed by his followers. In the dynamic reality, the unity in the apostolic faith exists in the plurality of Christian traditions in a great diversity of contexts, so that the quest for the common expression of the apostolic faith is to be found by the churches in their recognition of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed as the ecumenical symbol (i.e. confessional document) *par excellence*. In this recognition, the fundamental criterion of apostolicity lies in the consonance of our faith with the testimony of the apostles to God's revelation in Jesus Christ as recorded in the Scriptures.

Furthermore, the dialectics between contextual and global history of the church point to another direction, namely, the future. The history that grounds the fundamental criterion of the apostolic faith of the church should not be confined to the past. It is still moving ahead to the future. It therefore illustrates how the Reformed tradition has preferred a pneumatological to a Christological foundation of the church, as Abraham van de Beek says: "Just as the Reformed tradition shrinks back from making the church too self-sufficient, there is also a reluctance to found it purely in Christology. If we do that, the church becomes Christ in the present, resulting in abandoning the once-and-for-all nature of his history in the past, and at the same time the church is then becoming the visible form of the revelation of God. That would have a still more massive impact on ecclesiology than hypostatizing the church would" (Van de Beek 1999, 27). The reason of that preference lies deeply in the history of the Reformation that rejects the idea of Christ's true presence in the Roman Catholic rite. Subsequently, the Reformed tradition has been inclined to a pneumatological ecclesiology, in which the internal human freedom has a prominent place as a point of encounter with the Holy Spirit: "The Reformed tradition also follows this line. We come to faith through Word and Spirit, and that Word can also be understood as the outward witness of the Holy Spirit" (Van de Beek 1999, 27).

'below' and what is 'above' us. Although a great deal of what we do is done seemingly by chance and with free will, it is not at all so. We arrive at this sense of dependency with respect to God through a free decision of conscience. There can therefore be a free conscience before God. Given this free conscience, which is actually determined by the acknowledgement of one's dependence on God, it is also possible, within the limits of this ultimate dependence, to speak of the free human will. It is this divine 'before', this common and equal dependence on a power that transcends human existence, that actually creates human equality and hence mutual freedom among people" (Brinkman 2003, 139).

Moreover, the dialectic of Christological and pneumatological ecclesiology would point to a Trinitarian ecclesiology. Among other scholars, Gijsbert van den Brink has suggested this approach to the ecclesiology of the Reformed tradition (Van den Brink 2010, 313-326). He argued that the Trinitarian approach will allow room for the Reformed tradition to develop, on the one hand, a serious concern for the tradition that has come from the historical past, but on the other hand, an open orientation toward the changes of the future (Van den Brink 2010, 325). The Trinitarian approach will combine the secular, material, as well as spiritual aspects of the church in a way the Triune God maintains its divine inter-communion.

This kind of approach has in fact been developed since the sixteenth-century Reformation, in which the Reformers argued about the inseparable natures of the state and of the church. The authority of the state was regarded as the realm of the secular life, and the authority of the church as the realm of the spiritual one. Despite the fact that the Reformation created a breach with the Roman Catholic Church, it was intended to continue the Trinitarian approach of the apostolic tradition. As an illustration, Eberhard Busch has noticed that Calvin maintained the ancient ministerial offices in his lively effort to reform the church:

Calvin believed that representatives of the offices of the church should lead the church according to the model of early Christianity (pastors, teachers, deacons, and elders—this last office, of course, being where the political leadership also sat in church leadership). [...] This resulted precisely from the conclusion he drew from the thought that (as he formulated it) the advancement of God's glory and the humaneness of humanity belong inseparably together, and the keeping of the second table of the Ten Commandments in the state is impossible without the keeping of the first table as well. (Busch 1992, 192)

This approach then, has evolved in modern days into prophetic movements of the Reformed churches such as the one in 1934 by which Karl Barth and his friends formulated the Barmen Declaration to oppose the demonic character of the Nazi's regime, saying: "the church may not be left to the state even in its outward form of organization but rather must be structured according to its own nature" (Busch 1992, 192). By this declaration, Barth moved the church toward the promising future without abandoning its sense of traditional root and prophetic calling. From this position, the Reformed tradition has found – according to Busch – its distinguished characteristic, namely, it believes in the principle of church-state separation. This principle is based on the fact that the state should be a secular institution that serves the law whereas the church should be a spiritual institution that serves the Gospel, but in reality both are both are distinctive but inseparable (*distinctio est non separatio*) according to the very nature of the Triune God (Busch 1992, 186). Although this interpretation of the Reformed position reflects more Karl Barth's position than Calvin's, it was influential in the Reformed world, especially in the circle of the Reformed, anti-apartheid movement in South Africa in the sebties and eighties of the former century.

Moreover, the Trinitarian principle reveals another, already mentioned character of the Reformed ecclesiology: it believes in the catholicity of the church in manifold expressions; it believes that fundamentally there is only one church belonging to Christ, but this church has always had many faces. It is a unity in diversity, so to speak (Brinkman 2010, 313-325).

The diversity, however, is always great in the Reformed tradition, including the diversity concerning matters recognized as common ground for the unity of the churches. As said, there have been Reformed churches that feel related to the classical Reformed confessions, for example, but there have also been churches that never feel related to them (Sell 1992, 433), so that the unity among the Reformed churches becomes an embarrassing situation (Van der Borgh 2010b, 1). About this situation, Martien Brinkman has stated that "[...] if we

were to emphasize more clearly the common aspects in Christianity, cultural diversity might very well be left to be less of a menace” (Brinkman 1997, 53). He therefore has suggested five points that might illustrate the feeling of unity among the Reformed churches. These are: (1) the proclamation of the Gospel, (2) the recognition of the same content of the liturgical order of Baptism and of Eucharist, (3) a universal ministry of reconciliation, (4) a number of common aspects of the Christian liturgy (such as the Lord’s prayer, blessings, greetings, etc.) (5) the Christian church hymns, Christian education and diaconate (Brinkman 1997, 53-55). Furthermore, he has noted that the danger for the Reformed churches is not its diversity but the spirit of schism, which manifests itself in the unwillingness to be united, as Brinkman says: “the ‘heresy’ of the Reformed tradition might very well be due to its lack of a *sensus unitatis*, in the sense of: lack of awareness of unity as one of the main characteristics of the Christian truth [...]” (Brinkman 1999a, 111).

Regarding this lack of a *sensus unitatis* among the Reformed churches, Lukas Vischer indicated several factors that may have contributed to this problematic aspect (Vischer 2010, 22-24). Firstly, in the Reformed tradition, there has been a great spirit for putting the true church into existence and throwing the false church into non-being. Secondly, the local churches in the Reformed tradition have tended to become involved with a social movement which could polarize not only a society but also the body of Christianity. Thirdly, the local churches in the Reformed tradition have come from manifold mission societies. And, fourthly, today there are a great number of migrations. Vischer subsequently argued that these four factors have assimilated with the main doctrine of the Reformation regarding the human freedom because of justification by faith alone.¹² This doctrine opens a highway for individualism which, in Protestant Biblicism, has gradually created a distance from many churches that degrades the awareness of the social and ecumenical dimension of Christian faith. The social and ecumenical dimensions of faith give a spiritual communion both synchronically with their contemporary fellows and diachronically with their ecclesiastical ancestors. Vischer, therefore, has suggested communion as a spiritual treatment to improve a Reformed awareness of their ecclesiastical vulnerability and to reduce their ecumenical dissolution: “Communion is primarily a spiritual reality. [...] Movements towards unity can only bear fruits by concentrating on the primary spiritual reality” (Vischer 2010, 29).

However, communion of the churches cannot come automatically. It needs a common basis being developed into a sustainable structure (Vischer 2010, 29). The common basis should be traced from the historical background of every church, and should be projected toward the future in the hope of the on-going providence of the Holy Spirit. This would imply the recognition of the fundamentals of the Reformed confessions such as the Belgic Confession of 1561, the Heidelberg Catechism of 1563, and the Articles of Dort of 1619, as well as the Westminster Confession of 1646. These confessions have been supplemented with other modern confessions, such as the Barmen Declaration of 1934 by which the German Protestant Churches declared publicly their opposition to the Nazi’s politics that put the church under the authority of the state, as well as the Belhar Confession of 1986 by which the Dutch Reformed Mission Church in South Africa stood against the politics of apartheid (Naudé 2007, 249). Through their confessions of faith, the Reformed churches

¹²Brinkman has argued that the growing convergence between Lutherans and Roman Catholics on the doctrine of justification opens our awareness of the personal-existential aspect of human salvation: “. . . though this doctrine [i.e. justification] is not the only ‘interpretament’ (Schillebeeckx) of the Gospel, it is a major one, since it focuses on a central human experience. Far from repressing human experience, it invites free participation in the salvation brought about by Christ’s death and resurrection. The convergence draws together doctrine and liturgy, the personal and the communal, and especially the divine gift and the human response” (Brinkman 1996b, 217).

pronounce their Christian faith publicly in order to present evangelical values in their societies.¹³

The above development reflects the nature of Reformed spirituality. On the one hand, it is a spirituality of providence, that belief in the irresistible grace of God, as it has been stated by the Synod of Dort,¹⁴ by which the human effort does not have a place in eternal salvation. Yet, on the other hand, it is a spirituality of responsibility, that awareness that believers should follow their Lord in each particular historical situation, as it has been illustrated by the history of Reformed confessions. It can be summarized by the words thankfulness and responsibility in that sense that the former is the precondition for the latter.

The current development, however, indicates that there has been a change in the stressing point in the Reformed tradition from the eternal divine axis to the temporal human praxis. This change has entailed the supremacy of the local confessions whose orientation for the most part be rather nationalistic than ecumenical (Brinkman 1999a, 111). This is understandable since the local confessions have been formulated to deal with contextual situations with different genealogy from the history of mainstream Christianity. However, this situation could add some obstacles to the need of ecumenical communion among Reformed churches.

Regarding this situation, despite its national orientation in times of the beginning of the Dutch Republic, the Synod of Dort was designed to be a universal ecumenical forum. It not only consisted of Dutch theologians but also of representatives from England, Scotland, Germany, Flanders, and Switzerland.

These so-called ‘foreign theologians’—as the government (the Generale Staten) had decided—also had a ‘decisive voice’ at the synod. So they were allowed to take part in the voting. When it became clear that the synod would not proceed to formulate one general confession for all Reformed churches, chairman Bogerman suggested preserving unity among the churches in at least two ways. In the first place by mutually sending to each other the various confessions of faith for approval. And secondly, through the promise that no individual church will make an important change in its confession without having consulted the sister churches. (Brinkman 1999a, 110)

The nature of Reformed spirituality, moreover, has triggered a critical awareness about the relation between the omnipresent church revealing the divine providence and the actual-present church revealing the responsibility of the people of God. This critical awareness has been anchored in the sixteenth-century Reformation, as the reformers—such as Zwingli, Bullinger, Calvin, etc.—refused the claim of papal power because they realized that the true church was in fact present everywhere beyond the political realm of the imperial church (McNeil 1992). Calvin likewise radicalized this critical ecclesiological awareness by arguing that the visible church was only instrumental. The church is provided by God as an instrument helping humanity to have faith. It has magisterial functions and a teaching ministry, but never has it become the source of the faith of the believers. The source of faith is God who works through Christ in the Spirit, so that the church should not claim the divine

¹³Cf. the teaching of the Presbyterian Church in USA that relates the devotional aspect to the social and cultural dimension of the church (PCUSA 1992, 20). The confession of the church should be firmly established, but in response to the challenging situations it should also be amended or developed further (Blount 2007, 48).

¹⁴At the synod of Dort (1618-19) the doctrine of justification has been amplified by stating the fundamental will of God, namely, predestination, which creates an asymmetry between the fate of elects and of reprobates. This asymmetry was criticized in 1973 by the Conference of Leuenberg where the Lutheran and Reformed theologians reflected their theological legacy and realized that it is forbidden by the Scriptures that the human beings claim to have divine knowledge about the hidden mystery of the tribunal of God (Brinkman 1999b, 162).

position which always exclusively belongs to God. In summary, the character of the Reformed spirituality is thus illustrated by Abraham van de Beek:

It is characteristic of Reformed theology to see the church as relative. . . . What matters is not the church but the Word. The church is a proclaiming church. Here too, however, one must be careful. All too quickly the church runs the risk of confusing its words with God's Word. Then the preaching of the gospel degenerates into a proclamation of ecclesiastical or Christian ideology. That risk arises whenever the word is understood as a doctrine, which allows itself to be formulated as an entity, which must be believed, passed on to others with the intention that they too are going to subscribe to this doctrine. . . . But we must see it in connection with the second part, 'by which God lures us into fellowship with Christ, and keeps us in it.' The church is thus the means through which the intimate relation with Christ comes into being and is preserved. The church is the stationery on which stands the beloved's declaration of love. Of course, it is not the stationery which is important, but the declaration of love. Indeed, it is not the declaration which is ultimately important, but the beloved. But the stationery on which He has written his declaration of love is preserved as though a golden trinket." (Van de Beek 1999, 23, 24)

Sacramentological Dimension of the Reformed Spirituality

John Calvin has defined the idea of sacraments to be "the visible sign of the invisible grace" which is provided by God in order to help the believers to have faith (Inst. 4.14.1). Through the sacraments, the invisible God has decided to lead the believers to his divine mercy by the material elements; and through the sacraments, God "set before us in the flesh, a mirror of spiritual blessings" (Inst. 4.14.1). Referring to the church father Chrysostom, Calvin continues his argument: "For if we were incorporeal, he would give us these very things naked and incorporeal. Now, because we have soul engrafted in bodies, he imparts spiritual things under visible ones. Not that the gifts set before us in the sacraments are bestowed with the natures of the things, but that they have been marked with this signification by God" (Inst. 4.14.3). In this sense, Calvin's position is clear that he has maintained the sacraments to be symbolic in their function of representing the divine grace.

However, Calvin also has carefully noted them to be serious symbols which cannot be separated from the piety of the recipients. He has illustrated that sacraments are two-sided events. On the one hand, it comes from God who accommodates himself to the human believers under these symbolic matters. On the other hand, it should be accompanied by the proper piety of the receiving believers. In this two-sided event, what is corporeal will reveal what is spiritually real: ". . . we must consider what a sacrament is. It seems to me that a simple and proper definition would be to say that it is an outward sign by which the Lord seals on our consciousness the promises of his good will toward us in order to sustain the weakness of our faith; and we in turn attest our piety toward him in the presence of the Lord and of his angels and before men" (Inst. 4.14.1).

Calvin's theology of the sacraments, however, could not reduce serious polemics among the inheritors of Reformed spirituality. Although the intention of the sacraments is about the union of humanity with God, the history of the Reformed tradition has shown that it easily created separation instead. It separated Lutherans from Calvinists and it stimulated obstacles among the Reformed churches in searching for a mutual communion with all members of the denomination, as illustrated by Lyle Bierma:

One of the great ironies in the history of Christianity is that the sacraments, which are supposed to exemplify and strengthen the unity of the church, have often become a source of division. [...] What is heartening is that under our very eyes, that is, right within our own confessional and liturgical tradition, there are sources and bases for pursuing the visible unity of the church. [...] The challenge for us in the

21st century is not only to discover more such resources in our sacramental tradition but also to use these resources to bring the spiritual unity of the church to greater visible expression. (Bierma 2010, 135)

Moreover, one should not forget the Calvinistic precept of God's accommodation. The sacraments are by no means to understand as magical instruments beyond human capabilities. They are spiritual instruments within the limits of human understanding as they are used by God to accommodate the grandeur of divine revelation into ordinary human experience. This is illustrated by Laura Smit: "Accommodation is a big theme with Calvin: God translates himself into terms that we can understand. Calvin asserts that just as a nurse bends over an infant and speaks baby talk, so God speaks to us at our level, using signs and images that we can grasp in order to lead us to truth beyond our grasp" (Smit 2005, 209).

Berkouwer likewise has used the classical idea of the sacrament in Reformed tradition by pronouncing Calvinistic words: "Reformed theology speaks of the sacraments as signs and seals" (Berkouwer 1992b, 217). What to be signed and sealed by the sacrament is the divine promise never to leave his people, and this promise creates comfort and certainty in the human heart. The very objectivity of the sacrament, therefore, is always beyond the human grasp, but empirically it could be touched by the human senses through the materially sacramental elements, and it could be experienced existentially by the human soul through the spiritual assistance of the Holy Spirit.¹⁵ This theological idea is found in the ancient confessions of Reformed Christianity such as the French Confession of 1559, the Belgic Confession of 1561, and the Heidelberg Confession of 1563.

In the French Confession, it is stated that "the two sacraments are not empty signs, nor yet do they possess any intrinsic power; they are instruments employed by God to strengthen faith and to give us Jesus Christ. God signifies nothing to us in vain. In both sacraments he gives us really and efficaciously what he there represents to us, and with the sign is joined the true possession of what is signified" (Gerrish 1992, 250). In the Belgic Confession it is stated, that "the feast is a spiritual meal in which Christ communicates himself to us [...] nourishing our poor souls by the eating of his flesh" (Gerrish 1992, 251). And in the Heidelberg Catechism (Q. 65) it is stated, that " [...] as certainly as I am washed with water and eat the bread, so certain can I be that Christ's blood cleanses me from sin and his body nourishes my soul" (Gerrish 1992, 251).

Berkouwer has furthermore stated that the substance of the divine promise, being signified and sealed in the sacrament, is nothing else than the Lord Jesus Christ himself. Receiving a sacrament is nothing else than receiving Jesus Christ to be one's Lord and God. Therefore, " [...] without receiving Christ who is signified by the sacrament [...] the sacraments are nothing at all without their truth [...] " (Berkouwer 1992b, 218).

However, in the Reformed tradition, the debate on the sacraments then continued by questioning: what is the meaning of 'receiving Christ'? Is it a human effort from below or a divine grace from above? If it is a human effort, the sacrament is nothing else than symbolic performance of a theological idea. But, if it is a divine grace coming from above, the sacrament will be a kind of magic beyond any human understanding and will stimulate a superstitious devotion which has been a disreputable way of believing according to the Reformation. In this context, one should be careful in reading the sacramentology of the Reformed theology. The substance of the sacrament is always laid in God alone, but its symbolism is on the side of the human beings, and both are distinctive but yet inseparable,

¹⁵The *Heidelberg Catechism* question 66 and the *Belgic Confession* article 33.

inviting the recipients to have themselves prepared in receiving what their Lord has instituted for the church. In other words, the substance of the sacrament is not laid in the glory of humanity but in the glory of God (Berkouwer 1992b, 219).

Is that idea of sacrament valid because of coming from Calvin, or of Zwingli, or of other sixteenth-century Reformers, or of the prominent Reformed confessions? If it is so, how could it be justified by the Reformed spirituality since in Reformed history it has revealed not the glory of God but of humanity?

Concerning the above question, it is essential to consider the argument of Brian Gerrish that the discussion about the sacraments among the Reformers was in fact pointing to the deeper layer of sacramentology than just theological ideas of the prominent Reformed theologian John Calvin (Gerrish 1992, 249). According to Zwingli, the Lord's Supper is fundamentally symbolic pointing to the body and blood of Christ. Its efficacy comes not from the materially elements but from the spiritual attitude of the believers. For Calvin, this presupposition is an improper idea of piety because it relies on the glory of humanity forgetting the deeper realm overseen by the glory of God. On the other hand, Calvin was aware of the threatening superstitious belief of the old medieval church that he believed had been tolerated by Luther who assumed the presence of Christ in the material elements of the sacraments. In this sense, he articulated the role of the Holy Spirit who becomes the sole agent presenting the glory of God in the realm of humanity. In other words, the sacraments are instituted not by humans but by the Lord Jesus Christ, through the secret activity of the Holy Spirit, who accommodates the glory God in the realm of humanity. The sacraments are symbolic instruments used by God for the sake of humanity, so to speak. Consequently, on receiving the sacraments, one should look not to the material elements but to the Lord Jesus Christ who is truly but spiritually present among his people in the Holy Spirit beyond the sacramental events. In the Confession of 1562, Calvin said: "through the signs of the bread and wine our Lord Jesus presents to us his body and blood", so that Brian Gerrish has formulated the Calvinistic idea about the sacraments, saying: "For in Calvin's view it is the nature of the sacraments to cause and communicate (*apporter et communiquer*) what they signify" (Gerrish 1992, 248). This point of view was developed in a very long conversation with the other Reformers who had different perspectives, such as Bullinger who, in 1561, drafted the Second Helvetic Confession by using the method of symbolic parallelism, saying: "outwardly we eat the bread while inwardly at the same time we also feed upon Christ's body" (Gerrish 1992, 250), revising the formula of the First Helvetic Confession of 1536 assuming the sacraments conveyed what had been symbolized (Gerrish 1992, 249). As a conclusion, the sacramentology of the Reformed tradition has come not from solitary theological speculation but from a theological communion of faith between Christians who believed that God is really present among them, but who refused to believe that the really present God could be located under the realm of humanity.

Martien Brinkman, moreover, has tried to reinterpret the Reformed legacy about the sacrament as including four aspects: "the true-to-life relation in the symbolic aspect; the church-transcending proclamation of the kingdom of God in the eschatological aspect; the communion and continuity with all the witnesses of this Gospel around and before us in the ecclesiological aspect; and the concentration on the salvific meaning of Christ's death and resurrection for our daily life in the soteriological aspect" (Brinkman 1999b, 90). The symbolic aspect has the intention to reveal the human relationship with the true life, which is always in mystery, and which is always in need of being grasped by rites and liturgy that might empower individuals to deal with their present life in a meaningful way. The

eschatological aspect of the sacrament has the intention to illustrate the substance of daily hope which moves the vitality of humanity. Subsequently, the ecclesiological aspect gives an empirical medium to the communion of the believers administering the spiritual message of the Scripture into an experiential praxis of faith. The soteriological aspect eventually has the intention to reveal the substance of life springing from the death and resurrection of Christ behind every single historical event in human history.

These four aspects of the sacrament point to the spiritual value, revealed by the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. This spiritual value is that to find one's rebornself, one should not be egocentric but be concerned about the salvation of others. The incarnation of God has a divine purpose, namely the salvation of the universe and not just the personal satisfaction of mankind. In receiving the sacraments, the fundamental spiritual value that should be tasted by the believers is not the comforting joy they individually experience but the awareness that God has willingly joined them into his divine majesty to create salvation for the world. This kind of awareness is not egocentric but oriented toward "the redemptive destiny of God's creation" (Brinkman 1999b, 70).

This awareness will stimulate the sense of being in relation to everything in the world, which could be described somehow as a mystical experience. The hidden God who cannot be seen by human eyes and who cannot be grasped by human knowledge is recognized by the believers' faith. While the old medieval church might articulate it to be the true presence of divinity in the sacraments, the Reformed theology would pronounce it to be the manifestation of the glory of God enlightening the believers' faith. In this enlightenment, the believers would see, touch, and feel being in relation with the divine activity in the universe, without losing their mind or being drowned in insanity. It is a sense of understanding about continuity and renewal, so to speak. It is the knowledge that God has created the world, whose sin caused evil and suffering, and redeemed its wretchedness—through Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit—by presenting a new beginning towards the fullness of creation. The awareness of being involved in such redemption would stir one's heart into the nature of what one might say to be Reformed spirituality, and would awaken one's spirit to realize his or her personal genuine freedom (Brinkman 1999b, 9).

In the awakening spirit, one would experience a changing orientation about his/her existence which becomes *coram Deo* 'in the presence of God'. In this changing orientation, God becomes not just a theological idea but a real supreme Being whose hidden words have awakened one's existence in relation to their Creator. The distant God becomes adjacent, so to speak, as it has been illustrated by Brinkman:

What follows in the sacramental act is a fundamental change of orientation. The interaction of word and action, in the sacramental act, has nothing to do with magic.[...] In the sacrament, the dialectic of distance and nearness which we consider to be characteristic of every trinitarian speaking about God finds a concentration to which there is no parallel and which reaches its culmination in Christ's salvific work. At the moment we allow ourselves to be impressed by the essence of baptism and eucharist as salvation for us (*pro nobis*), this distant and near God seems no longer so near and no longer so distant that we could not come to Him and die and rise with Christ. (Brinkman 1999b, 66)

In the administration of the sacraments, the opportunity for that changing orientation is served by the ministry of the Word in the believers' preparation to receive the sacraments appropriately. In this sense, the presence of Christ is served before the administration of the sacraments, so that it is Christ's presence that brings the efficacy of the material elements of

the sacraments, and not the other way around. In his divine presence, the event of Christ's incarnation in the historical past has been adjacent to the present experience of the believers. This changing orientation becomes the substance of the experience of faith of the believers in the church (DeVries 1999, 405).

The substance of faith needs to be maintained, otherwise it will evaporate in the discontinuity of human experience. The maintenance of faith likewise could be found in many forms such as literature, theological books, structured organization, and expressions of worship (Leith 1992, 5). These are the praxis of spirituality which, in relation to the sacraments, is to provide a vehicle for faith experiencing the presence of Christ in every aspect of human and ecclesiastical life. This praxis, however, should be maintained by the spiritual order of the church, otherwise it would dissolve into chaos and could not function to serve the glory of God. For this reason, the church always has the task of keeping its ministerial life in order.

Ministerial Dimension of Reformed Spirituality

Regarding the ministry, John Calvin has said that principally, God never needs any human agency to operate his dominion (Inst. 4.3.1). He can rule the universe directly by himself. However, the Scripture declares that the Lord has taken some people to be his ambassadors in the world. Although he does not need any help from human agency, the Scripture has illustrated that God uses several people elected by his divine majesty to represent his divinity in the world. For believers, this biblical fact should be seen as divine grace to present the spiritual exercise of humility among God's people; because, it is hard to see the existence of God represented by a fragile human being if it is not accompanied by humble piety. Likewise, it is in fostering mutual love that believers are bound together under a good leadership serving the people of God as their ecclesiastical leaders (Inst. 4.3.2).

Calvin furthermore has articulated that in the church tradition there are two kinds of ecclesiastical office, namely, the temporary and the permanent ones. He has shown that the temporary office is illustrated in the Scripture to be the office of the prophets foretelling the future coming of the Messiah, whereas the permanent one to be the office of the apostles managing the institution of the church that Christ established on Earth (Inst. 4.3.5). The nature of their work is to do what the Lord has commanded of his disciples, namely, to preach the gospel and to baptize people who believe (Matthew 28:19), and to administer the distribution of the sacred symbols of his body and his blood according to what the Lord had done among them (Luke 22:19). The nature of their positions, likewise, is coming from the Lord, since no one can promote himself to be a person of God or to be his apostle. It is the Lord himself who has chosen the disciples whom He sent to the world. It points to the fact that no one can ask for an ecclesiastical position. It is God who chooses to whom he will give the position to be an apostle, as it has been confirmed by the apostle Paul who in Galatians 1:1 has testified that nobody gave him the ordination but the Lord alone (Inst. 4.3.13). This principle should be an exercise of piety in that there is no spiritual matter that arises from human initiatives or good works. The ecclesiastical offices should flow directly from the tribunal of God.

However, as the principle that governs the existence of the church and sacraments, namely, that God accommodates his holiness unto the weaknesses of mankind, the existence of the ecclesiastical office should have the same treatment. As there is, for humanity, no direct connection between the sacraments and the sacred things they signify, there is also, for

humanity, no immediate relation between the tribunal of God and the tribunal of men in the process of choosing the ecclesiastical offices. The direct connection and the immediate relation between the sacramental symbols or ecclesiastical offices and the divine holiness emerge only from the merciful glory of God and not of humanity. Therefore, what is needed, is a pious attitude toward an open human heart anticipating the pointing finger of God. In this case, subsequently, Calvin pointed to the way the early church chose Matthias (Act 1:23) to argue that a prudential deliberation consulting the church order must take place every time the church has to choose persons for ecclesiastical offices (Inst. 4.3.14). This is the spiritual principle for the church in dealing with God who accommodates himself, namely, that for humanity there is a perpetual obligation to express gratitude to the divine accommodation by intentionally and prudentially managing the spiritual realm of the church without falling into idolatry.

Calvin's spiritual principle for the church dealing with the divine accommodation has subsequently developed for generations and become a theological tradition of Reformed spirituality, whose stressing point presupposes the church to be an instrument of divine grace and not to be of human power. The ministry of the church is not a structural instrument of power, because it is always organically rooted in the people who believe that the ministry is the symbolical presence of the reign of God upon them. This has nothing to do with coercive power, but has to do with gentle, mutual love proclaiming the Word of God and administering the sacraments of Christ by relying on the spiritual assistance of the Holy Spirit. The ministry is a living organism of the church (Bavinck 2008, 326). In this kind of organism, the ordained ministers are not people of ecclesiastical power, but of service for the sake of the gospel. As a social organism, there is naturally a realm of power in the church, but this is meant for nothing else than the service to proclaim the Word and to administer the sacraments properly, as Bavinck says: "Church office includes teaching and ruling but is always about service and never about power. Office-bearers are ministers of Christ who serve his church" (Bavinck 2008, 328).

What does it mean that the ministry is not of power but of service for the sake of the Gospel? That means that the ministry is not only for liturgical purpose, but also for revealing something that goes beyond the rituals. In the Reformed tradition, it is believed that the Gospel is always a living salvation in the real life. The church ministry has not only to do with ritual service but also to create mutual connection between the spiritual salvation and the life of the church on a daily basis. It is not only dealing with the liturgy but also with the structure of the church. For this reason, Eddy Van der Borgh has defined ministry as "the way the church is structured in order to optimize the proclamation of the Gospel and the structuring of the church. In this structure a special responsibility is accredited to the ordained ministry, relating to all aspects of episcopate [i.e. ministry in relation to unity among the people of God]" (Van der Borgh 2010a, 232). In this definition, the ministry is a service of maintaining the structure of the church, by which the people of God are served so that they can live peacefully and in harmony with their neighbours, either of the same community or of different groups of believers. Ministry is the service of the church toward the unity among the people of God, so to speak.

Because it is serving the unity, ministry is in need of a proper legitimacy which is grounded in the message of the Scripture as well as in the living organism of the church. The Reformed tradition believes that the legitimacy for ministry relies on the meaning of its ordination. Theologically speaking, ministry of the church springs from the divine majesty of God. Ordination can only be legitimate if it follows what has been decided by God. The Reformed

theologian Herman Bavinck pronounced the principle, that the ordination is not a sacrament but assumes the spiritual gift that has already been given by the Holy Spirit, saying: “ordination [...] is not a sacrament and does not bestow but presupposes the charismata required for office” (Bavinck 2008, 328). In other words, the very source of legitimacy for the church ministry is always hidden in God.

The divine legitimacy, however, is also revealed through the church which is the people of God, and this is what happens in the ordination for church ministry. The ordination does not create the office of the church, but it is “the solemn public declaration before God and his congregation that the person is indeed called by God and ought to be received, recognized, and honoured as an office-bearer” (Bavinck 2008, 328). By this solemn declaration, the believers confess publicly that they are experiencing what God has decided, namely, that the divine majesty has elected an individual to be his minister in the church, and that all believers involved in the event are giving their positive answer. The one being ordained expresses his or her personal vocation; the congregation expresses their belief in terms of their election; and both parties present their solemn declaration before the Lord who is present in the midst of his people. This Reformed idea of ordination is illustrated by Bavinck, as he describes the process of ordination as follows: “The route by which Christ put his servants into office runs through three stages: vocation, examination, and ordination. Internal calling, involving assessment of personal gifts and desire, must be confirmed by the external call of the church done on Christ’s behalf. In the examination of teaching elders or ministers though, the church’s own teaching doctors (professors of theology) may be deputized by the church and could certainly assist the church in its examination, yet the right and responsibility finally belongs to the church” (Bavinck 2008, 328). In this process, it is revealed that the ministry is to serve the unity among the people of God. It serves the unity between the church and their Lord as well as the unity between the fellow believers both within and outside the local church.

Although the Reformed tradition has such a strong belief about the inter-relationship between the election of God and the decreative process among the people of God, it is historically evident that the Reformed churches have always struggled with their ecclesiastical unity. Although the Reformed tradition accepts the legacy of early Christianity about the three instruments of unity, namely the canon of the Scripture, the apostolic confession of faith, and the ministry of the church, their church unity has remained fragile and easily broken. The reason is that the third instrument of unity, i.e. the ministry, has been suspiciously regarded because of the tragedy in the sixteenth century, when the Reformed churches experienced evil from the abusive medieval-church power (Van der Borgh 2010a, 235). While the Lutherans enjoyed political protection from the German nobilities, the Reformed communities in the Switzerland and Low Countries had to develop their resistance in terms of confederations independent from the supervision of the Roman bishops. In this situation, the theology of ministry in the Reformed tradition became allergic to the office of the bishop which was believed to be the disintegrating factor for the confederations. “For the Reformed tradition the church and its hierarchical structure has proved its potential for church division and, as a consequence, has never been recovered as a unifying force. The communion with the institutional church is conditional, and ordained ministry can never be fully trusted” (Van der Borgh 2010a, 234).

Among the Reformed theologians, the allergy to the office of the bishop has developed into the suspicion toward the institutional aspect of the church, illustrated by Eddy Van der Borgh: “Reformed theologians tend to walk on the path of confirming the suspicion against

ministry in the church” (Van der Borgh 2010a, 235). While it is generally believed in the Reformed tradition that the church is the manifestation of God’s sovereignty among his people, some theologians have hesitated, fearing that human ministers might bring the divine sovereignty into their ministry. They can claim the divine position, naturally, but they cannot present the heavenly realm as it is always beyond any human grasp. This situation has created much suffering in the unity among the Reformed churches. The idea of ‘no popery’ that became an emancipative slogan in the sixteenth-century Reformation has now become a threatening principle creating disintegration in the unity of the Reformed churches. This is becoming more and more apparent: “‘No popery’ was not only a blessing, expressing liberation from an oppressive hierarchy, it finally led to a curse—a sectarian, self-destructive tendency” (Van der Borgh 2010a, 241).

Furthermore, the disintegration implies other problems. Firstly, it reveals that the faith in the one, holy, and apostolic church is becoming more and more alienated among the Reformed Christians; because, while maintaining the ancient belief of the early church, it is difficult for them to create a concrete manifestation of their faith (Van der Borgh 2010a, 237).

Secondly, it reveals a crisis of Reformed spirituality in which people no longer see that the ordained ministry is a precious charisma from God for the unity of the church (Van der Borgh 2010a, 237). Thirdly, it reveals a crisis of identity in which the common language of ministry is hardly found among the Reformed churches (Van der Borgh 2008, 202).

The above problems likewise have made an ambiguity in the Reformed theology of ministry. On the one hand, ministry is understood as a continuation of what Jesus Christ has established among his apostles, namely, an institution of unity between individuals with their fellow believers and their unbreakable relationship with the Saviour. On the other hand, ministry is understood as a defensive issue against the old church which has been losing its legitimacy on the ecclesiastical power (Van den Borgh 2010a, 240). To handle this ambiguity, the Reformed tradition has developed two codes of the true church unifying all believers in the universe. The two codes are “the pure ministry of the Word and the pure administration of the sacraments” (Van den Borgh 2008, 202). These codes are universal principles, which need to be found in a particular historical phenomenon as the local church. Faithfulness to the apostolicity and catholicity of the church is enveloped by them and is grounded in the phenomenon of the local church. This, however, means that keeping faith to the one and holy Catholic Church has been reduced into the belief in the “catholic church” par excellence beyond the phenomenon of the local church. As a result, the Reformed theology of ministry has become deficient, as it is not supported by a distinctive institutional church integrating the phenomenon of the local churches (Van der Borgh 2008, 202). This deficiency has become an unrelenting obstacle hindering the ecumenical unity among them: “The organization of congregations in denominational structures has the tendency toward a continued repetition of schisms. Often baptisms and ministries are not mutually recognized and eucharistic hospitality is refused to those who do not belong to their church” (Van der Borgh 2008, 202).

The deficiency of church unity in Reformed theology of ministry furthermore is due to the Protestant tendency toward the functional meaning of ministry. Remembering Calvin’s sacramentology, one may say that ministry is the instrument of grace. It is in itself not the divine grace, but no more than a human instrument. As the instrument of the invisible divine grace, even so, the ministry has a symbolic character; it represents the appointed divine grace as Eddy Van der Borgh has illustrated it: “Because they constantly point to Christ, the ministers themselves become a centre of unity for the life and witness of the community and

for the union with Christ. The symbolic function carried out by the ordained minister, consists of three different elements: (1) representing Christ vis-à-vis the community, (2) representing the unity of the body of Christ in the local faith community, and (3) representing the unity of the local faith community in a wider ecclesiastical context” (Van der Borgh 2010a, 238). The ordained ministry is an ecclesiastical function that helps the church to maintain an orderly structured relationship with Christ and with his current earthly body in terms of the catholicity of the church. This symbolical union for the most part is manifested in the administration of the sacraments which always presupposes an individual or individuals with a valid ordination.

In the Reformed tradition, however, there is a reticence to pronounce the symbolic function of the ministry in relation to the presence of Christ among his people. “The fear that ministers will take the place of Christ as Lord of the church and the fear that this language may lead to an ontological understanding of ministry are unmistakable” (Van der Borgh 2010a, 238). The reticence is understandable, due to the abuse of ecclesiastical power in the sixteenth century, but it needs a new interpretation at a time when the Roman Catholic Church has revealed to be very committed to the process of reforming itself.

Regarding the reticence among the Reformed churches to pronounce the symbolic function of ministry as the representation of Christ among his people, Eddy Van der Borgh has argued that there is a need for a re-evaluation of the theology of ministry by using the most central category in the Reformed tradition, namely, the belief that the substance of ministry is for the service of the Word and of the sacraments (Van der Borgh 2010a, 239). These two tasks need to be radicalized. As the Word and sacraments uniting the church with their Lord, the substance of ministry is to reconcile all churches with their Saviour. In other words, the very core of the church ministry is to serve reconciliation and unity, and to keep the schism and disintegration away from the life of the church. The reconciling and unifying task of ministry is to be done, for the most part, in the administration of the Eucharist which is the on-going sacrament of unity in the church. Through the Eucharist, unity in the church is provided by the unifying spiritual grace of Christ in the Holy Spirit, and “The Eucharist is the place *par excellence* to express the unity with Christ and one another” (Van der Borgh 2010a, 239).

The Eucharist, however, is an ambiguous rite due to the fact that it is a point of encounter between the most holy Christ and wretched humanity. The Eucharist may function to provide unity among the Reformed churches, but because of the humanity of its ministers it cannot automatically guarantee the catholicity of the church. Likewise, it reveals the ambivalent nature of church ministry, namely, on the one hand the Eucharist is provided by the power of the Holy Spirit, but on the other hand it is done by the human ministers who always struggle with their weaknesses. In other words, the problematic situation of the Eucharist as the unifying sacrament of the church lies in the fact that it is administered by human ministers who might become the source of dissension, stain, and blemishes of the church. The ambiguity of the Eucharist is created by the ambivalent nature of the ministry, as Martien Brinkman has said. The ambivalent nature of ministry might become, at the same time, the blessing or the curse for the church:

Since they [i.e. ordained ministers], too, are after all human beings in every respect, it is only realistic to regard ministry, ecclesio-logically speaking, both a blessing and a curse for the church. The church has been blessed and punished with ministers, just as the people of Israel was also blessed and punished with judges, kings and prophets. Ministers, like anybody else, appear not to be exempt from the ambivalences of human behaviour. (Brinkman 1999a, 113)

In order to serve the unifying function of the ministry, its ambivalent nature needs to be clarified. The church ministry is essentially not a ready-made office. It is a redemptive process with many struggles, which has been traditionally formulated by the words of “*charisma*, *vocatio*, and *electio*” (Brinkman 1999a, 113). The first one arises from the Holy Spirit; the vocation comes up from the personal existential experience, and the election takes place in the objective selective process done by the church. The ministry becomes authentic when the three components are meaningfully integrated, but it will become problematic when they are in disintegration.

There is a significant mark of the authentic ministry which Martien Brinkman calls its “boldness, *parrèsia*” (Brinkman 1999a, 114). In this ‘boldness’, the proclamation of the Gospel becomes clear and evident so that the church unity would be provided. This ‘boldness’ includes both the ability to break the silence and the capacity to be contemplative in a noisy world. In times of persecution, when the church is silent and losing its spirit, the true ministry will break the silence and speak out the Gospel clearly as it has been done by the Belgic Confession of 1561, the Heidelberg Catechism of 1563, the Barmen Declaration of 1934, and the Belhar Confession of 1986. On the contrary, in a culture of banality and forgetfulness, when individuals lose their ability to contemplate spiritual matters, the true ministry will create a contemplative space for the church in which every individual is allowed to develop a meaningful experience of faith. In Brinkman’s words: “This ‘boldness’ will even make or break the proclamation of the Gospel. It may [...] be both a boldness for the purpose of being silent and a boldness for the purpose of speaking” (Brinkman 1999a, 114).

In order to cultivate the value of *parrèsia* (‘boldness’) in the ministry of the church, it is important to remember the three traditional elements of ministry (i.e. *charisma*, *vocatio*, *electio*). These concepts convey the symbolical function of ministry. They illustrate the depth of ministry which has a dimension of divinity, of personal humanity, as well as of objective social process. The ministry symbolizes the divine presence in the church by synthesizing the hidden power of the Holy Spirit and the manifest power of humanity. In this synthesis, one needs to concentrate its responsibility in the realm of humanity and should be careful not to put any claim to the realm of divinity. In this position, one is expected to appreciate the ministry of the church as the divine grace for his people, but at the same time one is expected to refine the human dimension of ministry, as has been illustrated by Dietrich Bonhoeffer who humbly put to himself the profound question: “Who am I?” By this question, it is revealed that Bonhoeffer’s *parrèsia* (‘boldness’) has come not from the process of indoctrination, but from the refined understanding of his ministerial position for the unity of the church and of all human beings (Brinkman 1999a, 114).

If ministers have ‘boldness’ as Bonhoeffer had, is the problem of disunity then resolved? The major concern of the Reformed churches is mostly the issue of contextualization in order to gain more relevance in the current world. This concern is understandable, since it has become the Reformed character since the time of the Reformation. For the most part, in the sixteenth century, the Reformed churches were the national churches with their local confessions such as the French confession of 1559, the Belgic Confession of 1561, the Synod of Dort of 1618-19, etc. However, in the twentieth century, Paul Tillich pointed out that there is a danger of what he calls pseudo-relevance, which refers to social activism and to spiritual detachment from Christ beyond ordinary reality “This [i.e. pseudo-relevance] refers to the social, the political, the educational, the psychotherapeutic activities of ministers. They all are relevant for human life. But none of them represents the meaning of the ministry as ministry. None of them makes the minister relevant as minister. . . . It has the tendency to cover up the basis for

the minister's claim to be relevant . . . that of pronouncing and repeating the message of a new reality" (Tillich 1960, 24).

In the situation where the church experiences pseudo-relevance, it may have a prominent position in the social order but its ministry does not bring the true Saviour in the midst of social reality. It might be a powerful church as in the medieval times, but it would bring spiritual eclipse creating stumbling blocks for true believers. This situation is contrary to the nature of the Reformed tradition. The pseudo-relevance is the most serious danger for the Reformed spirituality, so to speak.

The traditional concern for relevance, therefore, needs to be critically examined. True relevance is not to be found socially or culturally but spiritually, where the church might provide a mutual service in the world in which no one would be estranged from the salvation of Christ. Theologically speaking, this could be experienced by the communion with the crucified Christ, who is truly present in the historical reality of the suffering world (Tillich 1960, 32). If pseudo-relevance has the tendency to escape from the difficult situation with which the ministry has been confronted, true relevance would endorse the church ministry to become involved with the dark experiences of the world. What Bonhoeffer did has revealed the nature of the true relevant Reformed ministry in the world.

Summarily, the idea of relevance for a local church should be put in brackets. It should not be the crucial norm of the Reformed tradition, abandoning the union between Christ and his people. The true relevance of the Reformed tradition is to provide the *sensus unitatis* between Christ and all human beings. It is the norm against segregation, racialism, patriarchalism, and other disintegrating factors for social life. Consequently, true relevance of the Reformed tradition would include the unity among the churches. Here one needs to be humble and to hear the criticism of the Roman Catholic theologians saying "the Reformed churches had broken the unity and the apostolicity of the church" (Van der Borgh 2008, 212).

That criticism is in need of appropriation because the whole world has changed. The Catholic Church today has a different theological perspective than the sixteenth-century Catholicism. In the council of Vatican II, the Catholic Church recognizes the manifold function of the church beyond its ecclesiastical walls: "This Church, constituted and organized in the world as a society, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the Bishops in communion with him, although many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside of its visible structure" (Lumen Gentium 8). Despite maintaining its belief in the supremacy of the Roman pontiff, the Catholic Church today recognizes that the catholicity of the church is to be searched for in togetherness with all of the churches in the world.

In this perspective, Eddy Van der Borgh has argued that the Reformed churches may learn from the Catholic Church which has experienced that the office of the bishop is important for maintaining the unity among the different churches. Is it possible for the Reformed churches to re-think their rejection to the episcopal office? The episcopal office is fundamentally not the realm of power, but of ministry for the unity of the church. The concept of episcopate, which lies behind the idea of the bishop, is essentially not about control or power but about "watching, investigating, visiting, comforting, and caring like parents care for their children" (Van der Borgh 2007, 438). This is the ministry of unity for the integrity of the church. If there were an episcopal office unifying the various nationalities, ethnicity, and denominationalism among the Reformed churches, we might hope that the church unity would be better in the Reformed tradition.

Martien Brinkman, however, has emphasized that the unity among the Reformed churches depends not just upon the introduction of the office of the bishop but upon the development of a new ecumenical perspective (Brinkman 1997, 49). This perspective recognizes that the episcopate, i.e. the episcopal function, always includes persons, but also the task (the office) to oversee the global church. These personal and official aspects of episcopate are distinctive but yet inseparable. It is a hypostatic union, otherwise it would become a realm of power instead of pastoral care. The character of episcopate is fundamentally spiritual. It is a kind of spirituality whose very concern is the unity of the church. This kind of spirituality needs to be cultivated among Reformed ministers. While it is impossible to create an Episcopal Reformed Church without causing further schism, it is more promising to develop a Reformed spirituality with intensive ecumenical concern and apprehension so that the task of the ministry will be understood as “to render service to all believers and so to the whole world” (Brinkman 1997, 49).

The concern for ecumenical unity is in need of cultivation through liturgy. To develop this concern one needs more than intellectual reflection. One needs to cultivate it as a kind of spirituality, because the concern for church unity is fundamentally not only a system of belief or of value but also a way of life in the church ministry. This cultivation would include the process of what Byron Anderson called “part of the Christian *askesis*, the disciplined training—the traditioning—of persons for the Christian life and a means of inhabiting and imagining that life” (Anderson 2010, 165). ‘Traditioning’ means a process by which believers might adopt traditional beliefs and values with a clear conscience; they feel comfortable with a tradition, and do not feel that they are being manipulated. ‘Inhabiting’ subsequently means a process by which believers train themselves in a particular habit which they might find enjoyable. Imagining eventually is a process by which believers experience their faith through imagination so that the realm of faith would be meaningfully tested by their awareness. These processes are simultaneously developed in the liturgy (Anderson 2010, 165), so that while it seems impossible for the Reformed tradition to create a unifying institutional church, the ministerial value of unity is likely able to be appropriated and expressed in the liturgical life in the Reformed churches.

Furthermore, Eddy Van der Borghth realizes that the idea of living according to the Scripture is one of the causes that might contribute to the disunity of the Reformed churches (Van der Borghth 2007, 437). The exegetical approach would not provide a strong basis for church unity, since each party would feel that its own traditional way of life is, for the most part, in accordance to the Scripture. Another approach is needed, which is the approach to develop a spiritual habit of listening to the diversity of the Reformed tradition in order to understand “the way in which the Lord leads his people and Christ communicates with his disciples” (Van der Borghth 2007, 437).

The spiritual habit of listening to the Reformed diversity is in accordance with the nature of dialectics in the Reformed tradition. Since the very beginning, there is no one Reformed tradition. It is commonly believed that the very essence of Reformed faith is Calvinism. However, the history of Reformed Christianity has revealed that this belief is illusionary. The Reformed tradition has included not only the theology of Calvin but also that of Zwingli and of Bullinger. Their differences became more and more distinctive as the Synod of Dort tried to solve the problem by returning to strict Calvinism and removing Arminianism which has its root in the theology of Bullinger and Zwingli. Technically speaking, the contrast between them might be named in terms of supralapsarianism and infralapsarianism. Both represent the concern of Reformed tradition, namely, describing and proclaiming the glory of God in two

ways of speaking: supralapsarianism assumes that God has decided every single event in the world including the tragedy of the fall; while infralapsarianism assumes that God has decided everything, yet it is human beings who are responsible for their sinfulness and unbelief. Moreover, as Bavinck has studied, there is by no means a simple difference between Calvinism and other parties of the Reformed theology:

[...] between the theology of Calvin and that of Bullinger there is not a single material difference, only a formal and methodological one. It is the difference between supralapsarianism and infralapsarianism, between strictly theological and a federalist starting point, a difference that has always existed in the Reformed churches and has been recognized by both sides as Reformed. People mistakenly oppose each other in the positions that have always existed side by side and become antithetical only by a very one-sided overstatement (Bavinck 2003, 180).

In such a situation, spiritual listening to the way the Lord led his people and to the way Christ communicated with his disciples becomes a challenging mental exercise. It would take much concern for the ministry of reconciliation to integrate uncompromising differences, as Van Egmond states: “the office, particularly that of preacher and pastor, is a particularization of what is given to the community as a whole, it is especially the office that will represent reconciliation and justification. This requires from the office-bearer a special training in spirituality that, if all is well, characterizes the community” (Van Egmond 1999, 149). The minister is supposed to be aware of the richness of the Reformed tradition and to transform his apprehension of the complexity of the Reformed people into a concrete practical wisdom which might help his or her ministerial leadership to serve the unity among the Reformed churches. Sometimes, compromising is imperative, yet the minister is supposed as well to be aware that the main concern of his ministry is not to create satisfaction among people but to serve the divine determination to the world which leads to the glory of God (Berkouwer 1992a, 140-141).

The Idea of Piety in Reformed Spirituality

In the Reformed tradition, the idea of piety is ambivalent. On the one hand, piety is recognized as an important aspect of Calvin’s theology that is believed to be the authoritative theological source of the Reformed tradition. On the other hand, frequently, piety is seen pejoratively as a spiritual escape from the responsibility to make an actual confession of faith. The latter was a reaction to the seventeenth-century German pietism, which has been seen by many Calvinists as endangering the existence of the church because it created a church within the church, thus stimulating ecclesiastical disintegration. Even so, the message of German pietism was still important: namely, that Christians need the experience of God that might be very personal and unique.

German pietism started with Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705), whose famous books were *Collegium Pietatis* (1670) and *Pia Desideria* (1675). Regarding these two books, Trond Enger noted that in the first book Spener promoted his idea about conventicles within the church, and in the latter he pronounced his eschatological belief that the imminent conversion—i.e. the spiritual experience of born again—was imperative since the end time was oncoming (Enger 2000, 540). Spener’s movement was followed by the ministry of August Herman Francke (1663-1727) who re-articulated Spener’s eschatology in a new perspective; Francke believed that the coming of the Kingdom of God was “nothing less than reform of the entire world” (Enger 2000, 540). What was needed for this reform was

education in piety by which individual Christians were equipped for making active discernment regarding the things *adiaphora* (i.e. need self-testing), so that they could clearly see the difference between the really evil world that should be rejected and the natural world that should be cultivated for the Kingdom of God. The education in piety, subsequently, became the passion for mission work of Nikolas Graf von Zinzendorf (1700-1760) who believed that Christians in the world need “a non-confessional fraternal society” so that they can experience the true “religion of the heart” (Enger 2000, 540). Zinzendorf’s mission became international and promoted an alternative model of society, which was based not on formal confession but on the willingness to love and make peace with others. In other words, the German pietism believed that subjective individualism should become the supreme principle of Christian faith.

For the Reformed tradition, the human need of subjective individualism should not become the principle of faith. What should become the supreme principle of Christian faith is not the human glorification but the divine glory of God. This glory of God sustains everything in the world since God is the Creator of the universe. If there is a place for subjective individualism, it should be found in the glory of God framing anything in the human existence. How could the Reformed tradition articulate such a kind of belief?

It began with Calvin’s idea of piety, which is not to serve the human need but to serve the divine activity in the world. In his time, Calvin saw the main religious institution (i.e. the Catholic Church) as a corruptive church that had fallen into the hands of a papal regime which claimed that its power was of divine nature. It asked people to dedicate their human effort to obey God by putting themselves under the leadership of the church. Calvin rejected such kind of thinking; he believed that to obey God one should experience his/her true humanity. The prerequisite of this kind of knowledge is piety. The basic argument in his *Institutes* is that the knowledge of God is inseparable from the knowledge of humanity:

Nearly all the wisdom we possess, that is to say, true and sound wisdom, consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves. But, while joined by many bonds, which one precedes and brings forth the other is not easy to discern. In the first place, no one can look upon himself without immediately turning his thoughts to the contemplation of God, in whom he “lives and moves” (Acts 17:28). For, quite clearly, the mighty gifts with which we are endowed are hardly from ourselves; indeed, our very being is nothing but subsistence in the one God. Then, by these benefits shed like dew from heaven upon us, we are led as by rivulets to the spring itself. Indeed, our very poverty better discloses the infinitude of benefits reposing in God. The miserable ruin, into which there rebellion of the first man cast us, especially compels us to look upward. Thus, not only will we, in fasting and hungering, seek thence what we lack; but, in being aroused by fear, we shall learn humility. For, as a veritable world of miseries is to be found in mankind, and we are thereby despoiled of divine raiment, our shameful nakedness exposes a teeming horde of infamies. Each of us must, then, be so stung by the consciousness of his own unhappiness as to attain at least some knowledge of God. Thus, from the feeling of our own ignorance, vanity, poverty, infirmity, and—what is more—depravity and corruption, we recognize that the true light of wisdom, sound virtue, full abundance of every good, and purity of righteousness rest in the Lord alone. To this extent we are prompted by our own ills to contemplate the good things of God; and we cannot seriously aspire to him before we begin to become displeased with ourselves. For what man in all the world would not gladly remain as he is—what man does not remain as he is—so long as he does not know himself, that is, while content with his own gifts, and either ignorant or unmindful of his own misery? Accordingly, the knowledge of ourselves not only arouses us to seek God, but also, as it were, leads us by the hand to find him. (Inst. 1.1.1)

In the *Institutes*, Calvin argues that the knowledge of God is not only an abstract science about the existence of God, because to have such kind of knowledge one should live fruitfully both for humanity and for divinity. This kind of living is piety that becomes an active human awareness about what is useful for mankind and what is lawful for the service of God. Piety

is the indispensable faculty for having knowledge of God, so that to know God means to live for, to love, to serve, and to obey God. Having knowledge of God is being human in the mode of piety, so to speak. In Calvin's words, this is articulated as follows:

Piety is requisite for the knowledge of God. Because, to know God is not only conceive that there is a God, but also to grasp what befits us and is proper to his glory. (Inst.1.2.1)

Piety is awareness about what is useful to us and what is proper to the glory of God. In Calvin's mind, this kind of awareness is inseparable from the divine grace; it is fully human but it also comes from above, revealing the way God deals with the human beings. Calvin says: "our Maker supports us by his power, governs us by his providence, nourishes us by his goodness, and attends us with all sorts of blessings" (Inst.1.2.1).

The above statement reveals that in Calvin's mind God is always Trinitarian: the Creator, the Redeemer, and the Helper who facilitates the divine-human inter-relationship. In this sense, we could see the Trinitarian source of piety: namely, it comes from the Creation as the given past; it springs from the Redemptive activity of God in the continuing present; and it is protected by the Helping activity of the Holy Spirit toward the future consummation. In other words, piety is the source of religious awareness which has both divine and human nature. It is the source of the pure, genuine, authentic religion of human beings, which is aware of the magnificent power of God in daily life. This awareness is "a fit teacher of piety, from which religion is born" (Inst. 1.2.1).

This kind of awareness cannot be imported from the outside. It must come from the freeinner contemplation of personal individuals, in which one experiences the love of God and shows personal adoration of his/her Creator. In this sense, piety is the human loving-adoration and adoring-love to God, as Calvin says: "I call 'piety' that reverence joined with love of God which the knowledge of his benefits induces" (Inst. 1.2.1). This is the source of the authentic human religiosity, which Calvin called "religion": the awareness of the magnificent power of God. Piety is the very source of religion; in other words, religion without piety is a mistake; religion that is based on coercion is a false one, because it cannot be implemented outside personal individuality. True religion, accordingly, is characterized by trust, reverence, and worship. These are the aspects of piety. Piety means that one is putting his/her self under the protection of God's goodness; likewise, it means that one has a high regard for the divine majesty; and, it also means that one manages his/her life to have a lawful worship according to God's command that keeps him/her from the danger of idolatry. This principle was used by Calvin to make a clear distinction between the right worship, which had evangelical character (i.e. of Protestantism), and the wrong devotion characterized by superstition and idolatry (i.e. of the papism).

To give a proper interpretation about Calvin's piety, which has become the anchor point of the Reformed tradition, we should understand his sixteenth-century context when he was in continuing conflict with the Roman Catholic Church. What Calvin had in mind was not only to make a clear theory about human religiosity but to make people committed to action based on their faith. Serena Jones argues about/discusses it by saying that:

... it is obvious that Calvin is no longer simply defining pietas. Instead, he is trying to persuade the readers of God's great mercies in order that they might actually experience the very disposition he has previously set forth. Given Calvin's decidedly practical description of pietas, it follows that he would attempt to invoke a pious disposition in this manner. According to his definition, true knowledge of God does not consist of a simple intellectual assent to God's existence. Rather, it involves trust, obedience, and worship. Thus, if Calvin wanted to define for his readers the meaning of pietas in terms that move

beyond the realm of simple conceptual knowledge, then he would have had to use a language that would elicit such things as trust, obedience, and worship. (Jones 1995, 147)

In other words, we could say that for Calvin, piety means the commitment to action in order to clarify what is believed in faith. Piety means faith in the action of loving, adoring, and obeying God. By this action, man would be in mutual relationship with God through which his knowledge of God would grow continuously.¹⁶ It grows in the dialectical relationship between God and humankind, and in this dialectical relationship the grace of God will be more and more experienced by humans. Analyzing Calvin's idea of worship, Pamela Moeller refers to the two aspects of Calvin's idea of worship. On the one hand, worship is a human activity to approach God; on the other hand, it is substantially the activity of God to approach human beings. Between the two, there is a continuum in which the elements of worship—such as the ministry of the Word and sacraments—are experienced by Christians as the real interaction with God. In worship, the finite human beings are incorporated into the infinite God, so that the knowledge of God will always grow and the human experience of the divine mercy will expand more and more. Pamela Moeller articulates this train of thought, saying: “worship is uniquely expressive of this conviction that Christ Jesus came to enlarge God's graciousness toward incapacitated humankind into dialogical, living relationship” (Moeller 1988, 225).

The active dimension of Calvin's piety is what nowadays is called spirituality. Having a mature study of Calvin's texts, Elsie McKee believes that Calvin's theory of piety reflects his spirituality, saying: “How then might Calvin's spirituality be described? It is helpful to begin by substituting the word piety for spirituality; *pietas*, piety or godliness, is a word Calvin frequently uses, while the traditional word *spiritualitas* is foreign to his language” (McKee 2001, 4).

If that is the case, the discussion about Reformed spirituality would have an affirmative ground. It is grounded on the discussion about piety and pietism in the history of Calvinism. According to what has been discussed above concerning several theories about Christian pietism, Calvin's spirituality and what is now called Reformed spirituality can be described as the idea of faith committed to action. It is the faith that Christians are inseparable from Christ, not only in the future life but also in the present day of worldly struggle. This union is created by the grace of God, which is inseparable from the piety of mankind.

Conclusion of the Chapter

The Reformed spirituality is about the service to the glory of God, which means to the ministry of reconciliation by using the spiritual heritage of the Reformed tradition. Hence, the Reformed spirituality is about the human effort to create a contextualized Christianity in order to give praise to God who has been actively working in the world of humanity since the very beginning of the universe. It has to do with being culturally contextualized on the one hand, and being spiritually in connection with the history of global Christianity on the other hand.

¹⁶The theory about piety as faith in action is what the Javanese would say about their idea of *ngelmu*. We will deal with this idea when we discuss the growth of Reformed spirituality in Java, when it is confronted with the Javanese religiosity (see chapter three of this dissertation).

In the next chapter, we will describe and prove how the Reformed spirituality has become contextualized in Java within the institutional-denominational body of the GKJ (i.e. the Javanese Christian Churches, which were the *Javaansche Gereformeerde Kerken in Midden-Java ten Zuiden*). Furthermore, in chapter four, we will analyze how the GKJ has been continuing its effort of contextualization by creating a new catechism (i.e. the PPAG) that opens further discussion about the root of ecclesiastical identity of GKJ in the Reformed tradition.

Chapter 3

Reformed Spirituality and the Early Javanese Christianity

In the previous chapter we have seen that Reformed Christianity was theologically understood as a particular manifestation of the people of God struggling for their existential faith as well as their religious institutions in history. Through the Reformation, many Christians in Western Europe understood their existence as a particular manifestation of the people of God in their historical context. Through the Reformation, they experienced the difference between true and false religion. While in the false religion they were forced to believe in superstition and to live under the power structure of idolatry, in the true religion, they were able to live their faith with a pure conscience and in freedom. In the true religion, they lived their faith existentially so to speak. After the Reformation, the struggle ensued with new themes and challenges. Before developing further into the idea of democracy of the twentieth century, after the American and French Revolutions, the Reformed people in the Netherlands believed that their ecclesiology, sacramentology, and theology of ministry were sufficient enough to speak about the nature and existence of the people of God in history. Those theological subjects were encapsulated in the three formulas of unity among the Reformed people, namely: the Belgic Confession (1561), the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), and the Canons of Dort (1619). With that kind of theological consciousness, and with the Dutch colonialism in Indonesia, the Reformed faith was brought to the people of Java since the nineteenth century.

In this chapter we will scrutinize elements of spirituality behind the early encounter between the Dutch Reformed Christianity and the Javanese people. For this purpose, we will describe: (1) the Javanese religiosity, (2) the primordial Javanese Christianity, (3) the Reformed spirituality expressed by the Dutch missionaries, and (4) several issues around the creation of a Javanese church.

Javanese Religiosity

The first difficulty in studying Javanese Christianity is that there is now a growing sentiment in Indonesia that says that the Javanese religiosity is Islamic by nature. That would mean that the Javanese Christianity has no place at all in the discourse of Javanese religiosity. In order to deal with this challenge, before we discuss the relationship between Reformed spirituality and Javanese Christianity, we will have a look at the meaning of the Javanese religiosity in the current anthropological research.

The people of Java, or the Javanese, have a distinguished outlook on themselves. There is a common belief among them that the Javanese religiosity is a sublime culture which is characterized by the quality of being indifferent to worldly matters. That kind of cultural quality was articulated by the Javanese word *adiluhung*, which points to a cultural entity of high-quality, manifested unintentionally by the human will but revealed naturally by the divine majesty in the moment of grace. For the Javanese, the word *adiluhung* designates a cultural idea of human spirituality, pointing to the ability of significant growth in a way that is not directly seen by other people. This growth of human spirituality is inside-out so to speak.

The Javanese religiosity has been studied by the American anthropologist, Clifford Geertz. In his book *The Religion of Java*, Geertz categorizes three cultural groups which embody the three types of Javanese religiosity, namely, the *santri*, *abangan*, and *prijaji* (or *priyayi*). Each group has a distinctive moral organism defining its ethical and cultural behaviour:

... the same population trouped according to their world outlook—according to their religious beliefs, ethical preferences, and political ideologies—yields three main cultural types which reflect the moral organization of Javanese cultures [...]. These are the abangan, santri, and prijaji [...]. The abangan religious tradition, made up primarily of the ritual feast called the slametan, of an extensive and intricate complex of spirit beliefs, and of a whole set of theories and practices of curing, sorcery, and magic, is the first subvariant within the general Javanese religious system [...] and it is associated in a broad and general way with the Javanese village [...]. The purer Islam is the subtradition I have called santri. Although in a broad and general way the santri subvariant is associated with the Javanese trading element, it is not confined to it, nor are all traders, by far, adherents of it [...]. The third is the prijaji. Prijaji originally referred only to the hereditary aristocracy which the Dutch tried to loose from the kings of the vanquished native states and turned into an appointive, salaried civil service. This white-collar elite, with its ultimate roots in the Hindu-Javanese courts of pre-colonial times, conserved and cultivated a highly refined court etiquette, a very complex art of dance, drama, music, and poetry, and a Hindu-Buddhist mysticism. (Geertz 1960, 4-6)

The three kinds of moral organism—*abangan*, *santri*, and *prijaji*—constitute what Clifford Geertz pronounced in his book to be the religion of Java. In this dissertation, we will call it as the Javanese religiosity. It does not indicate an institutionalized religion but a spiritual pattern of the Javanese people. It is a pattern of rationality, but it is not essentially philosophical. It is a pattern of general feeling about meaningful reality, which could not be understood without at the same time including these moral organizations.

In the current Indonesian discourse of cultural anthropology, Geertz's theory stimulated reactions from Indonesian scholars, especially those who assert that the Javanese religiosity is fundamentally Islamic. Among them is Bambang Pranowo who believes that Clifford Geertz has been misguided by a premature judgement towards the Islamic society in Indonesia: "[...] he was misled by the conventional anthropology whose arbitrary analysis has ruthlessly detached a local community from its broader social networking" (Pranowo 2009, 12). That would mean that to analyze the Javanese society apart from that Islamic network which has become its historical reality would lead to a false conclusion. In this case, Pranowo supplies his argument with fresh anthropological data developed from current Javanese respondents; and the result says that for the most part the Javanese people identify themselves as Muslims: not *santri*, *priyayi*, or *abangan* (Pranowo 2009, 363-367). These categories are none other than social Islamic groups with different levels of identification to be Muslims. Even the *abangan*, which has been seen by Geertz as the indifferent Muslims, are in fact Islamic people inclined toward a deeper faith in Islam. This is the picture of religiosity in both the urban and rural environment of Javanese society.

What still is in need of clarifying is that Pranowo's respondents come from the 2000's while Geertz's respondents come from the 1950's. In Pranowo's time, there was no social group which was allowed to declare its atheistic or even agnostic position in Indonesia; everyone must be able to show his/her ID-card stating membership of one among six religions officially recognized by the government. In Geertz's time, however, the situation was different as the young nation Indonesia had to consolidate its various social groups under not a religious but pragmatic shelter of nationalism. In this shelter, despite their political affiliation and international networking, all Indonesians should see their identity from their pragmatic alignment to the local groups united by ethnical blood ties and cultural tradition constructing the new nation's origin. As long as one did not become a part of western

capitalist-colonialist shelter, whether religious or atheist-communist, he or she might have a place in the new nation of Indonesia. It is reasonable to see that Geertz's respondents have reacted differently from Pranowo's sample.

Some fifteen years before Pranowo's research, the sociological disagreement on Geertz's theory had been recognized by the Indonesian philosopher Franz Magnis-Suseno. He said that Geertz pointed to the fact that there are so many beliefs and ideologies living in the country; and this is not a situation of "different stages of Islamization, artificially fostered for political purposes" but a condition that there are so many "irreconcilable and divergent worldviews" among the Indonesians (Magnis-Suseno 1997, 41). In addition, among the Javanese, not only are there irreconcilable and divergent worldviews but there is also a social polarization caused by the various beliefs (Ricklefs 2007, 86). The Javanese society is not monolithic; it includes multi-layers of social groups constructed by different belief systems. This does not reveal the different stage of becoming a particular religion because there are many religions in the Religion of Java, so to speak; it reveals the fact that the Javanese society is fundamentally a pluralistic society. As a consequence, being a Javanese would not mean being a member of a particular religion but of a multi-layered society which is always struggling to be a communicative society.

One of the challenges is how the Javanese society becomes a communicative religious society. In the midst of the existence of institutionalized religions in the Javanese society, there is the phenomenon of Javanese mysticism. This is popularly recognized by the word *Kejawen*, meaning the "Javanese"-ity. *Kejawen* is a phenomenon more or less representing the religion of Java as it discloses "the accumulation of religious practices in the Javanese society" (Endraswara 2006, 73). The mysticism consists of religious ideas conveyed by the ancient Javanese literature which is popularly believed to be of spiritual authority. The Javanese literature includes the *Arjuna Wiwaha*, *Serat Cebolek*, *Serat Sanasunu*, *Serat Wulang Reh*, *Serat Centhini*, *Serat Wedhatama*, *Suluk Darmogandhul*, *Suluk Gatholoco*, *Suluk Sujinah*, *Suluk Syekh Malaya*, *Suluk Malang Sumirang*, *Suluk Resi Driya*, *Suluk Topah*, as well as popular songs with a rural-pesantren background such as *Ilir-ilir*, *Sluku-sluku Bathok*, *Cublak-cublak Suweng*, and *Dhayohe Teka* (Endraswara 2006, 74). The literature represents a syncretistic orientation toward a divine-human unity manifested in both micro-cosmos and macro-cosmos. The micro-cosmos reveals itself in the human living experience, and the macro-cosmos reveals itself in the history of the universe. Between the micro-and macro-cosmos, there is an organic relationship as both are the synthetic process between the divine, human, and natural worlds. In this kind of thought, the *kejawen* believes that there are divine activities in the natural world being in relation to the human life. While human beings can acknowledge several religions in the world's history, the followers of *kejawen* believe that fundamentally there is only one God behind any kind of religiosity. This implies that no religion may have an absolute claim to the divine truth; and as there is no perfect religion, all religious people should learn to hear and to communicate their belief with people from different religions. Likewise, as the human's world is always in relation to the realms of nature and deities, there is a complex reality that should be admittedly located, namely, the reality of the spirit of the ancestors. They were human beings in the past, and they are in an ongoing journey toward the perfect reality of God. Although it is hard to recognize the precise characteristic of their existence, their beings should be appropriately located in religious ceremonies. The *kejawen* gives a name to various kinds of ceremonies, such as the slametan. Literally, the word slametan means a rite for salvation; because by doing the ritual it is believed that the complex reality could be put in order by making a social dramaturgy. In this kind of thought, the followers of *kejawen* believe, as stated by Endraswara, that they are

not people of apostasy worshipping illegitimate idols, since they are truly monotheists who submitted themselves under one supreme God (Endraswara 2006, 75).

Another variant needs further consideration. In the Javanese society, there is a kind of religiosity reflecting the Buddhist philosophy among the native people in their religious differentiation. The Buddhist philosophy here is manifested by, for example, a Javanese modern guru named Ki Ageng Suryamentaram (1892-1962) whose teachings are recognized by his followers as *wejangan kawruh beja sawetah* or the guiding principles of being truly in fortune (*Ajaran Ki Ageng* 1985, ix, originally a lecture given in 1931). Among these principles, there is a popular wisdom about the *mulur-mungkret* (growing and shrinking) symbolizing the character of human experience constituted by desire and suffering. The nature of desire is principally *mulur* (growing, expanding), while that of suffering is *mungkret* (shrinking). If one's desire is once fulfilled, it continuously becomes bigger and bigger without end. Consequently, fulfilling their desire, human beings become more and more entangled with the unsatisfied desire; this is the essence of human suffering. The strange thing is, on the contrary, when one suffers, one does not have any wish for anything else, including being released from the suffering. Then the human subject will see that his or her suffering be gradually shrinking (*Ajaran Ki Ageng* 1985, 2-7). The popular wisdom of this *mulur-mungkret* is recognized by the Javanese public, even though Suryamentaram never wrote a book or gave an oration before a great mass. For the most part, his teachings were communicated orally by his followers who joined him in regular meetings. Originally presented in Javanese, the sermons were subsequently written, translated, and eventually published in Indonesian language. Accordingly, despite the fact that Suryamentaram never institutionalized a religious group, his teachings became part of the philosophical elements of the *kejawen*.

Furthermore, in the *kejawen*, there is another variant of Javanese religiosity, namely, the *gugon-tuhon* (Negoro 2001, 93). The literal translation in English would be "superstition", yet with a positive connotation. The *gugon-tuhon* comes from two Javanese words: *gugu*, meaning to obey, and *tuhu*, meaning seriously; thus the *gugon-tuhon* means things that should be obeyed seriously. The things that should be obeyed include rituals for a successful symbolization representing the cosmic narrative experienced by the present Javanese society. For the sake of these rituals, one should "just obey seriously" by giving significant gifts for the sake of solidarity. For example, for the sake of rituals, one should bring offer meals towards the spirit of the ancestors. After the ceremony the offered meal will be turned into a public feast in which everyone may take part in a public dinner. In this sense, in the form of an offering meal, the *gugon tuhon* becomes an instrument for solidarity. It becomes a vehicle of public dramatization to narrate a cosmic harmony between the multi-layered realities of Javanese people including not only the visible present individuals but also the invisible spirit of the past historical humanity that moves altogether toward an unknown future. In this mystery, a Javanese should do the *gugu* 'obedience' with a *tuhu* 'serious' heart that believes in God.

Additionally, another variant of Javanese religiosity would include the rites of passage between the stages of human life from womb to tomb as a consequence that humanity is produced by micro- and macro-cosmic dynamics (Negoro 2001, 92). The rituals are fundamentally anthropological, meaning that they are instruments to cultivate meaning. These rituals include Javanese ceremonies such as wedding, the *mitoni* (prayer for a woman being in her seventh-month pregnancy), *tedhak siten* (prayer for a nine-month infant just becoming able to walk), *ruwatan* (prayer to extinguish bad fortune), *bersih desa* (prayer for

village sterilization from unwanted spirits), *labuhan* (prayer for the protection of the South Ocean goddess), and the festival of first-of-Suro (the new year of Javanese calendar). These rituals could be performed in various ways either in a celebrative or in a more simple way. Interestingly, there is a Javanese belief that these rituals should be done by a significant person otherwise they will produce unwanted misery. The qualification for a ritual leader includes his or her being *sepuh*, meaning 'old' either because of age or of spiritual knowledge. This would imply that the younger generation should honour their senior society without whom there would be no significant person to lead the Javanese rites of *slametan*.

The word *slametan* comes from the Javanese *slamet* (salvation); the *slametan* means a salvation ritual. For the Javanese people, the idea of salvation is not a static state of affair; salvation is a dynamic event revealing a fragment in the story of life. In this sense, some scholars believe that the *slametan* reveals the idea of salvation narrated in the Javanese folklore (Endraswara 2006, 74). In the story of, for example, *Aji Saka* and *Dewa Ruci*, there are popular Javanese values that frequently become the topic during the *slametan*. As represented by the figures of the stories, these values include: *sepi ing pamrih* (being authentically sincere), *rame ing gawe* (being industrious), *mamayu hayuning bawana* (being responsible towards the natural world), and *karyènak tyasing sesami* (being kind towards fellow neighbours). These values are characteristically religious although they belong not to any institutionalized religion. They belong to the Javanese culture with its mystical religiosity embracing moral values of all human religions (Endraswara 2006, 24). In fact, the Javanese religiosity is characteristically syncretistic as it always allows room for mystical ideas of Hinduism, of philosophical Buddhism, of Islamic Sufism, and even further of modern ideas of spiritual life (Hadiwijono 1967, 249).

Even so, the mystical tendency of the Javanese religiosity has been mostly influenced by Islam. Analyzing the Javanese literature, Simuh pointed out that the famous poet Ranggawarsita, for instance, pronounced the mystical voices of Javanese mysticism with an Islamic vocabulary. As the poet wrote his *Wirid Widayat Jati*, he illustrated the Javanese folklore of Dewaruci by using mystical ideas of Sufism concerning, for example, the seven kinds of human dignity (Simuh 1995, 170). The seven kinds of human dignity are experienced by every human being from the first moment of conception. They include the human dignity (1) in the mother's womb, (2) of nativity, (3) of childhood, (4) of adolescence, (5) of adulthood, (6) of terminal moment, and eventually (7) of the afterlife beyond death. In these seven kinds of human dignity every individual would see that everything is relative in a sense that what is real in one kind of dignity could become imaginary or even illusionary in another kind of dignity. In this sort of realities, the human should be able to humbly learn that he or she might be ever-growing towards perfection in mystical unity with the Creator of the universe (Simuh 1995, 216).

Subsequently, Simuh argues that in the time of the Dutch colonialism, the Javanese mysticism was apparently in opposition with Islam (Simuh 2001, 63). There were many Javanese aristocrats who said that they were Muslims but did not keep their five-time prayer daily, saying that the greatest importance of religion was not the *shalat* or 'the five-time daily prayers' but the mystical union with the spirit of God. This situation was understandable during Dutch regime as a non-Islamic ruling power. In modern Indonesia, however, the situation has changed. The ruling power of the country is becoming more and more Islamic in character. This situation changes the political character of the current Javanese aristocracy which frequently uses Islamic vocabulary to pronounce the Javanese mysticism as well as to do their *shalat* 'the five-time daily prayers'. Hence, for the most part, communities of

Javanese mysticism have changed their politically religious position, as they are not in opposition with Islam anymore.

Likewise, from another perspective, Javanese mysticism is fundamentally religious and does not refuse the institutional aspect of religion, which might be seen as the *pamor* or the uniting divine-human relationship. In this unity, there would be a cosmic integration—between the subjective micro-cosmos and the universal macro-cosmos—creating a unique manifestation of religious life. Hence, the Catholic theologian Koentara Wiryamartana notes that the key pattern of Javanese religiosity is fundamentally oriented toward what is referred to by the Javanese as *rasa*, meaning the subtle-affective drives in the human psychological state (Wiryamartana 1986, 61-82). In the *rasa*, one experiences the inner drives toward the truth, which is not only a mathematical truth, but even the transcendent truth of God. The inner drives animate the human inner-subjectivity, by prompting existential questions pointing to the wholly other who becomes the true teacher of the truth. This is the major quest in Javanese mysticism, puzzling with the existence of the *guru sejati* (true teacher):

Apakah artinya dan bagaimanakah wujudnya pamoring kawula-Gusti atau jumbuhing kawula-Guru Sejati itu? Manakah jaminannya bahwa persatuan dengan Tuhan itu sungguh-sungguh terlaksana?

Bagaimanakah memahami adanya Gusti-ning jagat gedhé dan Gusti-ning jagat cilik? Apakah Gustining jagat gedhé yang dialami sebagai yang mengatasi dan menguasai segalanya itu satu dan sama dengan Gusti-ning jagat cilik yang dialami sebagai yang dekat, ada di dalam diri manusia—bahkan berhimpit dengan “aku” manusia—dan didengar “suara”nya dalam lubuk hati manusia?

Bagaimanakah mengenali “suara” Tuhan itu? Apakah petunjuk Sang Guru Sejati sungguh-sungguh “suara” Tuhan? Bagaimanakah membedakannya dengan suara “aku” manusia sendiri atau pemunculan keinginan dan perasaan bawah sadar manusia atau suara “roh lain” yang ikut berbicara dalam batin manusia? (Wiryamartana 1986, 75)

The English translation of the quotation:

What does the servant-Lord unity or the servant-True Teacher harmony mean, and how does it become manifest? How can the truthfulness of that kind of unity be implemented?

How can we understand the existence of the Lord of macro-cosmos and the Lord of micro-cosmos? Is the Lord of the universe, who in our experience exceeds and governs everything, the same as the Lord who is subjectively experienced in the human individual consciousness—and even comes close to the human ‘I’ - and whose ‘voice’ is heard in the human heart?

How can we decipher the ‘voice’ of this Lord? Is the guidance of the True Teacher the same as the voice of the Lord? How can we see the difference between the true voice of the Lord and the voice of the human ego or subconscious drives or other kinds of spirit in the human heart?

Dealing with these questions, Wiryamartana presents his Catholic argument that there is a divine mediator who makes such a sacred intercourse possible; and this mediator is, as the Christian religion would say, Christ, because He is the True Teacher representing the Transcendent God being united with His people. Because of Christ, there is the *pamoring kawula-Gusti* (uniting divine-human relationship); and, as it is illustrated in the Bible, this would imply that a Javanese man or woman might approach God by making personal contemplation, a form of spiritual practice regarded by the Javanese religious tradition, about his or her relationship with Christ (Wiryamartana 1986, 75). From this perspective, the existence of institutionalized religion does not endanger the Javanese religiosity; instead, it gives a specific contribution to the mystical conversation.

Furthermore, not only is the Javanese religiosity inclined towards mystical orientation, but it also gives credit to the ethical dimension of human society. It assumes a cosmic continuation that relates the human personal experience with the historical-perennial realities which give context to every individual existence. In this sense, the Javanese religiosity assumes dynamics between cosmic realities, universal values, and personal-existential experiences. It integrates both active and passive modes of human existence articulated by some Javanese words such as *rilá* (sincerity), *narimá* (acquiescence), *sabar* (patience), *momot* (being ready for duty), *sumendhè* (relying on the divine providence). These words articulate the Javanese morality inclined to the principle of being active but maintaining the *via media*, 'a middle proportion', denoting that one should not take an extreme position (Subandrijo 2000, 121-128). In the Javanese morality, the individual subject should try to make place for a creative alternative in pursuing the intention of the human will. They should be able to solve moral dilemmas, not by choosing any extremes, nor by entering into a passive mode of existence, but by actively using one's personal consciousness to integrate his or her micro-and-macro-cosmos. Speaking religiously, that kind of thought could be formulated in a way which is endorsing an individual to do his or her duty seriously although the result of the endeavour is determined by the will of the Creator.

Such a kind of morality is exemplified by the Javanese stories which, for the most part, illustrate the conflict between the *satriya* (warrior, i.e. the good guys) versus the *buta* (monstrous being, i.e. the bad guys). While the *buta* is in nature strong but out-of-law, the *satriya* is always gentle but undefeated because of his being is in tune with the law of the cosmic reality. In this sense, the core value of Javanese mysticism is fundamentally not an escapist's utopianism but an ethics of *satriya*. The *satriya* is like a soldier in duty; he or she is being instructed by the lord to fulfill a mission which will bring him into conflict with the *buta* (the power of chaotic realms). For the most part, his mission is essentially a desperate one; it won't be achieved without assistance from the divine grace. His or her strength, wisdom, and skills therefore will never be enough to win the battle and to end the war, so that he or she must do some ascetic exercises in order to have heavenly attention from the deities. This illustrates that the human being is always in need of divine providence; he or she needs to become religious and he or she should be able to transcend any prejudice toward the other religions. By doing so, he or she will become a religious *satriya* popularly recognized as the *satriya-pinandhita* (warrior with man-of-god's moral quality). This *satriya-pinandhita* is in reality the Javanese image about moral virtues that should be desired and endeavoured, but at the same time could only be received as the divine grace in return of intense ascetics. Providing a frame of reference, the Javanese imagine that the endeavour of moral virtues is like a process illustrated in the myth of Bharatayudha, where the good Pandawa is in conflict with the bad Kurawa (Purwadi 2004, 5).

In that conflict, the Javanese create a sort of reflection concerning their either social or spiritual experiences. It is recognized, in the reflection, that there are a variety of forces interwoven in human history including the super-natural power of the spirits. The Javanese believe that the earth is never an empty planet. Even in the *terra incognita*, 'the unknown frontier', the realm of power either physically or spiritually is present. Incidentally, among the multi-layers of Javanese religiosity, both the Hinduism and Islam clearly recognize the spiritual realm of the ghosts. While there are elements of Buddhism and Christianity which incline to rationalism, the previous world views give significant influence to the Javanese religiosity that always tends towards a popular belief in the spiritual realm of the ghosts (Endraswara 2004, 4). While some ghosts might be friendly to the human, others are malicious and troublesome. These would be a part of the whole story illustrated by the

Bharatayudha, where the Javanese *satriya* are on a mission to achieve moral virtues that might heal the world from its misery.

Primordial Javanese Christianity

Especially in Europe, the nineteenth century was a time of great, even revolutionary changes. It was the time that the old structures of many royal houses came to their end. In this period, new politics were constructed to carry on the previous structure of imperial colonialism through various movements of both secular and religious character which tried to reshape their traditional European societies. In the secular realm, political movements changed European borders and created new modern states; and, in the religious realm, various movements produced new Protestant churches and missionary enterprises by which, following what had done before by Catholic missionaries since the sixteenth century, the *plantatio ecclesiae* was explored in the colonies which became Europe's new frontiers.

As noted by *The Encyclopaedia of Mission*, in 1797 a missionary organization was established in Rotterdam by the name of the NZG (*Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap*, Society of Dutch Missionaries). This organization cooperated with the London Missionary Society, through which they were able to send missionaries in 1812. Three men were sent to Java in order to explore the evangelization among Javanese people. These pioneering missionaries were J.C. Süpper, G. Brückner, and J. Kam (Müller Krüger 1961, 67). Unfortunately, because of the British *inter-regnum* in the country, they did not receive permission to do missionary work among the local people of Java. The three men needed to rearrange their missionary plans. Süpper became a pastor among the Dutch people in Batavia. Brückner resigned from the NZG and changed his affiliation to the Baptist Missionary Society; and, in this organization, while he did not succeed in developing a Christian congregation in Semarang, he devoted his life to a translation project and was successful in providing the first Christian literature in Javanese language. Kam, however, kept pursuing his missionary vocation to the people of the Moluccan islands; and in behalf of this mission, in 1813, he made some preparations in the harbour city of Surabaya in East Java (Van Akkeren 1970, 54-55).

In Surabaya, Kam worked during some time among the Dutch Christian people in the *Indische Kerk* (the Protestant Church of the Dutch East Indies), where he met a German man who had worked in the city as a watch-smith since 1811. This man, Johannes Emde (1774-1859), became motivated by Kam's commitment to evangelization. He organized his Christian friends in Surabaya into a lay missionary society, which then became the first agent for distributing biblical literature among the Javanese people in East Java (Van Akkeren 1970, 54-55). The biblical literature was provided by Brückner who dedicated his life to a Javanese translation of the New Testament.

After the biblical literature had circulated for several years, some Javanese people became curious about the Christian message. Among them was Pak Dasimah, a religious leader of the Wiyoeng village close to Surabaya (Brumund 1854b, 14). Having read the Gospel of Mark, Pak Dasimah became interested in the meaning of the idea of the "Son of God." He became so curious that he made a long trip through the *ngelmu* network in East Java, before he eventually met Johannes Emde who guided him into the Christian faith. Pak Dasimah was baptized in 1843. His long journey brought him to meet one of the *ngelmu* people at that time: Coolen, the chief of Ngoro village (Nortier 1939, 3).

Coolen

Coolen (1773-1873) was not a missionary, but a local landlord who organized the first Javanese Christian people in the village of Ngoro by using their *ngelmu* orientation. Coolen's father was a Russian and his mother was a Javanese; he was a man of mixed blood. He became a landlord after he received a twenty-five year contract (1829-1854) from the government (Van Akkeren 1970, 53). During these twenty-five years, he became both a successful farmer and an inspiring religious leader of the first Javanese Christian community. As a man who psychologically lived in two different worlds, he organized his Javanese workers not only with moral discipline as a pietistic European congregation, but also with mystical elements of Javanese religion that he received probably from his Javanese mother and relatives. In doing so, Coolen turned his community into a unique phenomenon, initiating the history of Javanese evangelism in the nineteenth century.

However, in the eyes of Emde and his lay missionary society in Surabaya, Coolen was notorious. Firstly, he left his children and European wife in Surabaya; and, in an Islamic ritual, he remarried with a Javanese woman who gave him children and a family in Ngoro. Secondly, he composed a syncretistic Christian creed by which he taught his people that Christ, as the Spirit of God, was the same as the Javanese divine personifications of Sri and Sadono. Finally, in order to separate his people from the influence of Emde, he forbade his Javanese Christians in Ngoro to ask for baptism which might destroy their Javanese identity. By doing this, Coolen was in confrontation with the pietistic Christians in Surabaya (Van Akkeren 1970, 53).

In this confrontation, it was the NZG missionary Jellesma who approached Coolen in a non-conservative way; he did not judge the landlord with a rigid pietistic Protestant standard. He allowed Coolen's people to receive baptism without leaving their cultural identity behind them. They may keep their Javanese name, wear their head-kerchief, and preserve their long hair during their baptism in 1854 (Van Akkeren 1970, 79-80). With this approach, Jellesma reconciled Coolen's *ngelmu* with the principles of Christian faith about sacramental baptism.

Tosari and Ditotaruno

Ten years before the reconciliation between Coolen and the Protestant Church of Surabaya in 1854, the issue of baptism had again become a painful experience for several people of the village. As Pak Dasimah from Wiyoeng searched Emde's guidance for baptism, some Ngoro people were also thirsty to have further knowledge about Christian faith, and they had great desire to acquire access to the initiating sacrament of Christian religion. Among these people were Tosari and Ditotaruno who had been expelled by Coolen in 1844, after they had violated the landlord's prohibition to receive their baptism (Van Akkeren 1970, 73).

Subsequently, after being expelled from their village, the newly baptized Christians, Abisai Ditotaruno and Paulus Tosari asked for protection from Emde and the lay missionaries' circle in Surabaya. Under their protection, they accompanied the NZG missionary Jellesma who had just started working in East Java. In 1851, Tosari and Ditotaruno became Jellesma's assistants in the Christian village of Mojowarno.

As a Protestant missionary, Jellesma organized Mojowarno by creating two interrelated administrations: one for civil office and the other for ecclesial leadership. The civil office was to organize secular life among Javanese peasants. Likewise, the ecclesial leadership was to edify their spiritual life by fortifying Christian morality and removing superstition. In their

interrelationship, both parties would always be in dialogue where the Scripture might be discussed and obeyed.

In his way to manage the new village, Jellesma appointed Tosari for the ecclesiastical leadership, while he placed Ditotaruno in the civil office. Therefore, in 1854, he commissioned Ditotaruno to make a clearance in the nearby forest by the name of Dagangan (Wolterbeek 1995, 22). In so doing, Ditotaruno was seen by the native Javanese peasants as a powerful *lurah* (i.e. village leader) so that they might feel safe and comfortable under his leadership. The plan was successful and Ditotaruno became the *lurah* or the chief of the new village.

Unfortunately, in 1857, Ditotaruno demonstrated his disobedience to the church by his participation in the Tayuban: a local festival where male people danced publicly with several female erotic dancers who were usually regarded as local prostitutes (Wolterbeek 1995, 32). Therefore, assuming, as a missionary, that participating in Tayuban was a shameful behaviour for the Christian life, Jellesma sentenced the ecclesiastical discipline (i.e. sanction, *tucht*) for Ditotaruno. He was excluded from the Lord's Table until he had shown his penitence publicly. However, confronted with Jellesma's commitment to defend the Lord's Table from immorality, Ditotaruno showed neither his willingness toward penitence nor his desire to attend the Lord's Table. This situation remained until the sudden death of Jellesma in 1858, leaving behind him the crisis of leadership in the new Christian village of Mojowarno (Wolterbeek 1995, 32).

In this crisis, fortunately, Paulus Tosari took his position as a spiritual leader of the new village whose people were new Javanese Christian people. He worked as a native church leader in Mojowarno, assisting the NZG missionaries in East Java at that moment: namely, T.A.F. van der Valk who had arrived in 1853 and stayed in Surabaya (i.e. Wiyung and Sidokare), S.E. Harthoorn who had arrived in 1854 and stayed in Malang, and D.J. ten Zeldam Ganswijk who arrived in 1854 and stayed in Kediri (Wolterbeek 1995, 30).

Tosari's pastoral burden, however, was not as heavy as Jellesma's responsibility. He was unordained to administer the sacrament, so he did not have any burden of defending the Lord's Table against immorality, as Jellesma had in his Reformed tradition. This position helped Tosari to regain a sympathetic approach to the party of Ditotaruno, and to keep a meaningful order in the village.

Besides his leadership, Tosari was a talented Javanese writer and he developed a poetical approach that was useful to communicate Christianity to the Javanese people. He used the Javanese *tembang* (hymn) and prose to communicate with the Christian principle; and, in these forms the principle was transformed into personal devotion to God. His writings were compiled in a book entitled *Rasa Sejati* (i.e. true rasa, or perfect spiritual affection) by one of his followers (Hoekema 1994, 48). This collection was probably rooted in his experience as the first native Javanese Christian church leader, who suddenly had to take the burden of pastoral work in Mojowarno after the death of Jellesma, 1858-1860, when he had to lead his people patiently. For the Javanese, patience was among prominent virtues based on *rasa* (i.e. spiritual affection, or intuitive politeness, sustaining the order of harmony); and, for Tosari, this kind of virtue was rooted in the Javanese interior-mystical experience of Christ in times when "so much exertion and sacrifice is demanded for 'nation-building', and where every kind of Christian activity is gradually geared to the activity of the state" (Van Akkeren 1970, 180). Moreover, the true *rasa* (i.e. *rasa sejati*) was pursued by the Javanese mystical tradition as the spiritual perfection explored by practicing the *ngelmu* (i.e. ascetical process) in order to

explore the Javanese inner gnosis and supernatural abilities. Therefore, by reflecting the Christian faith in terms of mystical *rasa*, articulated in the forms of *tembang* according to the traditional Javanese poetical norms, Tosari revealed the mystical character of the primordial Javanese Christianity. This character connected the Javanese Christian community to the network of the *ngelmu* adherents, whose prominent personalities in the Javanese church history were Toenggoel Woeloeng and Sadrach.

Toenggoel Woeloeng

The figure of Toenggoel Woeloeng (ca 1800-1885) was widely recognized by the Dutch missionaries as a Javanese hermit (Partonadi 1988, 46). As a hermit, he left the secular life in society and dedicated his life for a spiritual endeavour in solitude. He lived somewhere in the slant-area of Mount Kelud in East Java, before the volcanic mountain erupted in 1848. After that, he left his solitude and joined the Christian circles in Ngoro and Mojowarno. He was attracted to Christian religion, because he presumed Christianity to be a higher form of *ngelmu* (spiritual life, spiritual talent, and spiritual knowledge) than the *ngelmu* he had already received. But probably because he did not have a place as *angelmu* seeker, he left later these East-Javanese Christian circles and went to his home town of Juwana in the northern part of Central Java.

Because Juwana was close to Jepara where the *Doopgezinde* (Mennonite) missionary Pieter Jansz lived, Toenggoel Woeloeng continued his relationship with Christian circles by making personal contact with this DZV missionary (Jansz 1997, 63-142). Formerly, Jansz had a good impression of him although the missionary did not feel comfortable with his interpretation of Christianity that was constructed in terms of *ngelmu*. Accordingly, Jansz facilitated him to go back to East Java to make personal contact with his earlier resource person as to Christianity: namely the missionary Jellesma who was the leader of the Javanese Christian circles that Toenggoel Woeloeng had encountered in Ngoro and Mojowarno. Jansz may have hoped that, under personal guidance of the distinguished figure of Jellesma, Toenggoel Woeloeng would receive a deeper understanding of biblical Christianity, leave his *ngelmu* orientation, become ready for baptism, and renew his Christian life based on the religion of the Gospel (Jansz 1997, 110-112). Nevertheless, Jansz was disappointed because Jellesma had a different point of view; the NZG missionary decided to baptize Toenggoel Woeloeng in 1857 although the latter's knowledge about the Christian religion was minimal as he accepted the Apostle Creed, Our Father, and Ten Commandments in terms of the elements of the Javanese *ngelmu*. Afterwards, Jansz could do nothing but let the hermit go on in his search for *ngelmu* without direction from the Christian missionary. This exclusion, nevertheless, did not reduce Toenggoel Woeloeng's influence among many people who became Javanese Christians in the community under his leadership in the village of Bondo, in the northern part of Central Java. Moreover, his *ngelmu* network even provided a traditional religious education for the next generation of Javanese Christian leaders among which Sadrach was one of the most prominent.

Sadrach

Sadrach was an indigenous Christian who had *angelmu* orientation and became a prominent leader among Central-Javanese Christians. Born in a village at the northern part of Central Java, Sadrach learned the *ngelmu* in Semarang. His teacher was Pak Kurmen, one of Toenggoel Woeloeng's disciples, who brought him into contact with the chief of Bondo (Partonadi 1988, 57). His meeting with Toenggoel Woeloeng may have given him some information about the Javanese Christians in East Java, so that he went to the *ngelmu* circle in

Jombang, in East Java, at the same time when Jellesma started to live in Mojowarno in 1851 (Adriaanse 1899, 48). Adriaanse, who wrote Sadrach's biography, did not give any information whether or not Sadrach met Jellesma for learning Christianity, saying:

Toen de zendeling Jellesma te Modjo-warno woonde, waar hij zich in 1851 vestigde, was Radin [i.e. Sadrach] niet ver vandaar in Djombang op een santri-school, zoodat hij dien eersten Hollandschen zendeling op Java meermalen zag. Hij ging van Djombang naar Panaraga en was ook daar een tijd op zulk een school. Toen hij zoo wat kennis van den Islam had opgedaan, trok hij naar Samarang en zocht door verkeer met de Arabieren and de hadji's nog meer van Mohammed's leer te weten te komen. Hij droeg toen de naam van Abas of Radin Abas. Daar in Samarang woonde Abas in de onmiddellijke nabijheid van het Islamsche bedehuis, de misdjid, in den kring der vrome Mohammedanen. Hij kwam daar eens in aanraking met een helper van den zendeling Hoezoo, die hem op zijne wijze het Evangelie verkondigde. Abas zocht daarop den heer Hoezoo op, om meer van de zaak te weten en bezocht des Zondags de koempoelan bij dien zendeling. (Adriaanse 1899, 48)

English translation of the quotation:

When the missionary Jellesma lived in Modjo-warno, whence he was established since 1851, Radin (i.e. Sadrach) lived not far from that place in Djombang, in a *santri* school [i.e. a traditional Islamic college]. Therefore he met this first Dutch missionary several times. From Djombang, he went to Panaraga where he also followed such a traditional education. When he had received quite some knowledge about Islam, he went to Samarang and continued his study about Mohammed's teaching from some Arabs and a *hadji*. At that time his name was Abas or Radin Abas. In Samarang, Abas lived near a mosque, the *masjid*, and belonged to the pious Islamic community. There he accidentally met a [local Javanese] assistant of the missionary Hoezoo, who informed him about the Gospel. Then, in order to receive more knowledge, Abas contacted Mr. Hoezoo and attended the [Javanese Christian] fellowship on Sundays that was administered by the missionary.

So, in Semarang he met the NZG missionary Hoezoo, whose Javanese assistant was named Asa Kiman. As Tosari in Mojowarno, Asa Kiman became a missionary agent among local Javanese people through a mystical approach which, however, was not in terms of *ngelmu*. In order to get closer to the Javanese inner religiosity, he wrote some poetical lyrics which could be sung according to the traditional Javanese hymnal called *tembang*; and, by using this *tembang*, he transmitted to his Javanese fellows the message of the Bible as he knew it from the missionary's teaching (Hoekema 1994, 55). When traditional Javanese people hear the *tembang*, their affection becomes solemnly open to the message conveyed by the poetical lyrics being sung. This attitude was common in traditional Javanese communities which saw the *wayang* (i.e. puppet show) performance as significantly important for their life. By putting the Christian message into the forms of *tembang*, the Javanese missionary assistants were creating a solemn and authoritative stage for transmitting the Christian message into the heart of the Javanese public.

During his encounter with Javanese Christian communities, Sadrach was probably aware that there were two kinds of native Christian communities at his time: the ones under Javanese missionary agents such as Tosari and Asa Kiman who worked for the missionary enterprise, and the others under independent Javanese leaders such as Toenggoel Woeloeng in Bondo. Hence, unlike Tosari and Asa Kiman, Sadrach chose to continue his searching for *ngelmu* as it was done by Toenggoel Woeloeng. Accordingly, despite the presence of the NZG missionary Hoezoo in Semarang, he continued his search for Christian knowledge as a kind of Javanese *ngelmu*. He continued to expand his contacts with native Christian communities beyond the Javanese Christians under the missionary Hoezoo in Semarang. Moreover, he met some local Christians whose relationship with the missionary circles was anchored in the city of Batavia (Jakarta). Accordingly, Hoezoo sent him to Batavia to continue his search for a higher *ngelmu* by making contact with the lay missionary Mr. Anthing who helped him to

have a mutual relationship with the *Indische Kerk* (Protestant Church) of the city. In this church, he received confirmation education from the missionary of the NZG, Mattheus Teffer, and was baptized by Rev. Ader in 1867 (Partonadi 1988, 58). He received his biblical name Sadrach at this moment.

Why he left Hoezoo's Javanese community is unclear. Probably, he felt that the Christian community in Batavia was more open toward his *ngelmu* orientation than the one in Semarang. This openness of Anthing's community was manifested later on occasions when his Javanese *ngelmu* Christianity came into conflict with the orthodoxy of the Reformed theology of the NGZV (*Nederlands Gereformeerde Zendingsvereniging*, the Dutch Reformed Mission Union) that was working in Java at that time (Reenders 2001, 26-27).

After his baptism, Sadrach dedicated his life to the evangelization. Initially, he worked with Anthing's community of GIUZ (*Genootschap voor In-en Uitwendige Zending*, the Mission Society for Home and Foreign Mission)¹⁷ distributing Christian literature among the local people in Batavia. Then he went to Bondo to see Toenggoel Woeloeng who informed him about the Javanese Christianity in East Java, so he went to that area to see if he could find a place among the missionary enterprise. It seems that his effort was unsuccessful, so he went back to Central Java and worked in Bagelen for a Javanese evangelization enterprise initiated by a woman of mixed-blood descent: Christina Petronella Philips-Stevens, the wife of the supervisor of the government's plantation in that area.¹⁸ At this time, this lady was looking for a native teacher who was able to talk about the Christian religion to the Javanese workers living in her estate. She had sympathy towards Sadrach and this gave the Christian *ngelmu* searcher an opportunity to work for her mission. Protected by Mrs. Philips-Stevens, Sadrach walked around through the villages, talking about the gospel in terms of *ngelmu*, and attracted many people to become his followers.

Identifying his followers as Javanese Christians, Sadrach organized them to search for baptism in the Protestant church of Purworejo. However, the increasing number of Javanese members in the church became an unpleasant situation for some European members, who firmly held their colonial perspective, that is, indigenous people did not have an equal position to the European community. In addition, Sadrach's authority had much more influence among the Javanese Christians than the leadership of the NGZV missionary Bieger who cooperated with the minister of the Protestant church.

Immersed in bitterness, the NGZV missionary Bieger made an alignment with the resident of Purworejo Ligtoet, in order to destroy Sadrach's leadership among his people. They trapped Sadrach into a legal case because he refused the small-pox vaccination for the Javanese people, based upon his literary interpretation of the Christian Bible saying that, according to 1 Cor 1:8 and 1 Thes 5:23, Christians should not make any torturing mark on their bodies

¹⁷F.L. Anthing was a member of the Supreme Judicial Court of the Netherlands Indies. In his position, he traveled frequently between Batavia and Semarang. He was also a significant figure of the GIUZ missionary society, whose missionary network was related to people in the Netherlands as well as among local people in the western and central parts of Java (Aritonang 2004, 90-93).

¹⁸Christina Petronella Philips-Stevens was one of three ladies who dedicated their lives to the evangelization among Javanese people, the other two being Mrs. Elizabeth Jacoba le Jolle-de Wildt in Salatiga, and Mrs. Van Oostrum-Phillips in Banyumas. On their estates, these ladies organized the Javanese people interested in Christian religion and brought them to the circles of missionaries, such as Hoezoo (NZG) in Semarang, Anthing (GIUZ) in Batavia, Vermeer (NGZV) in Banyumas, Harthoorn (NGZV) in Tegal and Bieger (NGZV) in Purworejo. Besides, they also paid some Javanese teachers, such as Sadrach, who would be better able to communicate Christianity in terms of Javanese religion (Sumartana 1993, 18-20).

(Guillot 1985, 102). However, this conspiracy collapsed eventually when the higher court in Batavia released the Javanese Christian leader. As a result, rather than becoming suspected, Sadrach became much more admired by his people and his influential power grew significantly.

Sadrach's power, moreover, became even stronger when the subsequent NGZV missionary J. Wilhelm came to his post in Purworejo. As a young missionary originating from the *Gereformeerde Doleantie* of 1886, stressing that the church authority should be freed from any intervention of the state, Wilhelm wanted to apply this Reformed principle in Central Java. He may have seen that the relationship between the Javanese Christians and the board of the Protestant Church of Purworejo was an irreconcilable gap between two separate entities as the relationship between free-church and state-church. In this case, he decided to be cooperative to Sadrach and helped him to organize his Javanese Christian community as an ecclesial body with a structure that might be compatible to the Reformed principles. In this structure, besides having elders and deacons, the Javanese Christian community had Wilhelm as their pastor, while Sadrach became a leader who united the congregations under his charismatic influence.

Unfortunately, that structure came to ruins after the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands became puzzled about the contradictory information coming from their missionaries. The report of Wilhelm was different from the one of Bieger etc. While Wilhelm reported a significant growth of Javanese membership in his mission field, Bieger was critical about the quality of their Christian faith (Partonadi 1988, 81). Accordingly, the headquarters of the NGZV sent their representative, reverend F. Lion Cachet, for a careful inspection to the Javanese Christians at the NGZV's mission field. For this mission, they equipped Cachet with several criteria to evaluate the Javanese Christian people in Central Java: firstly, whether these Javanese Christians consisted of Muslims and heathens that sufficiently displayed the image of the true Church of God; secondly, whether the church offices were in conformity with the Word of God; thirdly, whether the Word of God was preached and the Sacraments were administered properly; fourthly, whether the church discipline was exercised; fifthly, whether the ecclesiastical ties were based on pure confession; and finally, whether the church administration was in conformity with the order of the Dutch Reformed Churches (Partonadi 1988, 82). It seems that the agents of the Reformed Churches who formulated these criteria, were not aware that without proper anthropological analysis these parameters would find negative answers as happened in Cachet's conclusions. At the end of his supervision in 1892, Lion Cachet hit the Javanese Christianity with his hateful criticism as he charged Sadrach for heresy and forced Wilhelm to end his relationship with the charismatic Javanese leader (Partonadi 1988, 84).

Being excluded by the NGZV, Sadrach was approached by the *Apostolische Kerk* (Apostolic Church) of Batavia. Probably, he had known about the church through his protector, Mr. Anthing, who had become a prominent member of this church before his death in 1883 (Wolterbeek 1995, 140). In its mission to Javanese people, the *Apostolische Kerk* invited him to take a part as one of their apostles. Receiving their invitation, as the apostle of Java, Sadrach maintained his Javanese communities scattered in the rural areas of Central Java until the end of his life in 1924.

Reformed Spirituality in Evangelism on Java

Reformed Spirituality Reflected by Local Agents of Evangelization: The Three Ladies

In the 1850s, when the Protestant pastor in Surabaya J.F.G. Brumund submitted his notes to be published in the Netherlands, the editor of Brumund's book made a reflection about the double calling of the Dutch people in Indonesia, saying:

Er zal echter nog veel moeten geschieden, eer die heerlijke toekomst heden zal geworden zijn: inmiddels moeten zij, die niet enkel den naam, maar ook het beeld huns Heeren dragen, de hand ijverig aan het werk slaan, om èn den naam-Christen aan hunne zijde, èn den Heiden en Mohamedaan in de verte voor Christus te winnen. Het eene moet men doen, het andere niet laten. Dat is de wil des Heeren: dat is de dubbele roeping van het Christelijk Nederland. (Brumund 1854a, xiii)

English translation:

However, before the glorious future is coming, there are still many things to be done: in the meantime those, who not only carry the name but also the image of their Lord, must work diligently, in order to bring both the nominal Christians near them and the Pagans and the Moslems far away to Christ. The first thing has to be done, and the second should not be delayed. So is the will of the Lord: this is the double calling of the Dutch Christians.

Such reflection reveals a sense of wonder, realizing that beyond the European ordinary world there was a significant sign revealing the work of God among what one hitherto might call the world of the pagan. In that world, there were native Javanese people in the spreading territories who yearned for the Christian message. The Protestant minister of the *Indische Kerk* in Surabaya, J.F.G. Brumund, noted that there were many Javanese Christian communities in the inland territories such as: "Waroe-Djajeng, Modjo-Warno, Ngoro, Sidokari, Soerabaja, Wioen, Modjo-Wangie, Modjo-Rotto, Maron, Soemboer-Gajan, Samarang" (Brumund 1854b, 1-164). Who might become missionaries among those indigenous people? As the number of European missionaries was so small and the mission bodies at that time were so weak, the missionary work among the native people must come from their own fellow natives who promoted their Christian faith. This faith was not only changing one's moral behaviour but it also created a new life and a new civilization.

Who were these fellow "indigenous people" who might bring the Christian Gospel to the inland territories of Java?

Most of them remain in the shadow. Several names, however, survived in the missionary record such as: Ma Christina in Batavia, Nyai Magdalena in Mojowarno, the two women in Emde's family, and the three ladies in Central Java (Sumartana 1993, 16-22; Partonadi 1988, 45). The two women in Emde's family were Amarentia Manuel Emde, the wife of Johannes Emde, and their daughter Johanna Wilhelmina. Emde's wife was in fact a Javanese woman, but her named was changed as she was baptized. Subsequently, the three ladies were the wives of D.D. Le Jolle, of J.C. Philips, and of Mr. van Oostrum. Their names are recorded in the missionary records as Elizabeth Jacoba le Jolle-de Wildt, Christina Petronella Philips-Stevens, and Johanna Christina Van Oostrum-Philips. These three ladies represented the people of "in-between." They were part of both the European and the Javanese society.

The first lady, Elizabeth Jacoba de Wildt, was an orphan. She lost her parents in the 1830s, in a war between the Netherlands and Belgium while she was sixteen years old. In 1841 she came to Java in order to follow her brother "who worked as acting controller in agriculture in East Java" (Sumartana 1993, 18). Later on she became the wife of D.D. Le Jolle (Partonadi

1988, 45) so that her name was known as Elizabeth Jacoba Le Jolle-de Wildt. She helped her husband to organize a native community working for a coffee plantation in Simo, close to Salatiga. When the native community in her household became Christians, in order to nurture their faith, she organized missionary work that became a significant part of Javanese evangelism. Later on, the missionary work was known as the Salatiga Zending.

The second lady, Christina Petronella Stevens, was also a woman whose blood was of “in-between”. Her mother was a Javanese woman, while her father was a Dutch man. She lived among the native community of her mother, while she also had access to the European community of her father. When she married Johannes Carolus Philips, she was recognized as Christina Petronella Philips-Stevens. She helped her husband to organize a Javanese community working in their indigo plantation in Ambal (Sumartana 1993, 20; Partonadi 1988, 45). Here, she had given a position to Sadrach in Javanese evangelism, before she died in 1876 and had left the native charismatic leader to organize their Javanese Christian communities alone.

The last of the three ladies was Johanna Christina Philips, the sister of Johannes Carolus Philips who became the husband of Christina Petronella Stevens (Partonadi 1988, 45). Johanna Christina was born in Salatiga in 1815. She grew up among the native population of Central Java, and her work as “a batik trader” in Banyumas assumed that she had a cultural aptitude toward Javanese religiosity, as there were many religious symbols behind the patterns of the batik.¹⁹ Later on Johanna Christina married a Mr. van Oostrum, so that she was recognized by then as Mrs. J.C. Van Oostrum-Philips. As a batik trader, she had many Javanese workers and spoke the native language fluently. Under her protection, the native workers became Christians and had close relationship with the Javanese Christian community in Ambal under the protection of Christina Petronella Philips-Stevens. These two Javanese communities grew significantly by the leadership of Sadrach, a Javanese spiritual teacher under the protection of Mrs. Christina Petronella Philips-Stevens and her sister-in-law.

These ladies were not ordained ministers or learned people who might produce theological writings. They were lay people who opened their household to become a part of the nineteenth-century network of evangelism of Java. Is that kind of attitude reflecting Reformed spirituality?

As lay people, they did not promote a particular kind of Reformed confession. Encountering the lower class of Javanese people in their household, they did not think about denominationalism. In the first half of the nineteenth-century Java, there was no Catholic missionary in their place. Almost all of the Dutch Christians came from the Reformed tradition, although we do not know whether they understood their Christian tenets according to the normative values of the Reformed tradition. The three ladies in the forefront of evangelism of Java were ordinary Christians who wanted to share faith about Jesus Christ with their Javanese fellows. They did not have any idea about ecclesiastical business such as reforming the congregation or defending the heritage of Reformed faith. They placed those tasks into the hands of ministers or missionaries whom they believe to be the divine agents in the world.

¹⁹Batik is the traditional pattern for Javanese linen. The pattern carries cultural ideas about the story of human life such as grief, glory, war, wedding ceremony, or daily life. Working as a “batik trader” assumes that the trader could explain many things about batik to her costumers. This implies that she has proper knowledge about Javanese religiosity behind the batik, which is an important cultural instrument for the traditional Javanese people.

What could be summarized from the above story is that in the nineteenth century, the Reformed spirituality among the local agents of Javanese evangelism was revealing their spiritual independency. They did not feel placed under the clerical authority of the church, but they respected the spiritual persons ordained for pastoral tasks among the people of God. They admired missionary pastors such as Hoezoo in Semarang and Vermeer in Banyumas. Likewise, they showed their esteem for the local spiritual leaders such as Sadrach and his colleagues. Before the pastoral situation became a mess because of ecclesiastical-political issues in 1882 and 1892, the spiritual independency was experienced by the local agents of Javanese evangelism as the divine grace. It was reflected by H.A.G. Brumund's statement above: namely, that the glory of God should be revealed by the quality of works and of faith-communication.

Reformed Spirituality Reflected by Dutch Missionaries

Among the missionaries, the idea of Reformed spirituality was experienced as a complex of issues on indigenous theology. It was not only a personal spiritual answer to the divine work but also an official justification of a personal spiritual decision. This complexity is reflected in the story of the first generation of the Reformed mission under the NGZV: Vermeer, Stoové, Bieger, and Wilhelm. The issues on indigenous theology ensued in the later missionary work, after the historical period of the NGZV, when the evangelization of Java was administered by the mission of the GKN (*Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland*, the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands) and when the idea of spirituality became more and more ecclesiastically institutional.

The first Reformed missionary working in Central Java was Aart Vermeer, 1828-1891. He was born in Haarlem and received his missionary education from the *Schots Seminarie* in Amsterdam from 1857 to 1860 (Reenders 2001, 873). After his graduation, he worked as an evangelist in Tiel, was appointed to be a missionary of the NGZV in Haarlem, and commissioned in Amsterdam, and eventually, in 1862, he arrived in the city of Tegal, in Central Java, to become a missionary working among the Javanese people. His method was to approach the unfortunate Javanese children who were abandoned by their parents for financial reasons. He married a German-born widow and opened an orphanage. As financial resource, he and his wife managed a toko (Asian store) to sustain the missionary work among the Javanese orphanage. This method, however, was done without approval of the leaders of the NGZV in the Netherlands, so that it created criticism as to his missionary work. In 1877, Vermeer was removed from the NGZV. Until the end of his life in 1891, he continued his work as a freelance missionary in East Java, supported by some individuals. During his career as the NGZV missionary, he had baptized Javanese Christians under the leadership of Sadrach and become their pastor in the southern part of Central Java. He had an adopted son, from a native-Chinese background, who was named Aart Vermeer Jr. By doing so, he may have had the idea that being a Christian is to be a part of the European people. His sense of spirituality was to save Javanese people from their pagan environment, so that they might be installed into a Christian environment as it had been developed in the history of western civilization.

The second NGZV missionary sent to Central Java was Hendrik Stoové. He was sent to Tegal in 1865, in order to help Vermeer in the missionary work, but eventually in 1869 he left the NGZV and became a civil servant of the government (Reenders 2001, 872). The background for this sad story was an irreconcilable conflict between Stoové's family and the local leaders among the Javanese Christians. His father-in-law was frequently in conflict with Laban, the

missionary assistant of Vermeer (Wolterbeek 1995, 72), and he was trapped between being committed to the missionary work and being loyal to his father-in-law. This dilemma was solved by his resignation from the NGZV as he started working with the government in 1869. This case reflects the fact that in this period the Reformed missionary did not have a free spirit. Stoové was tied up with many moral obligations beyond his missionary work. The idea of working for the glory of God was not implemented by a daily habit of making a spiritual decision to choose the path of Christ instead of the world. As the spiritual formation was weak, in times of crisis this lack of spiritual habit would then become a turbulence of moral dilemmas.

The third NGZV missionary in Central Java was Philipus Bieger (1841-1911). He received his missionary education in the same school of Vermeer, namely the *Schots Seminarie* in Amsterdam (Reenders 2001, 858-859). He arrived in Tegal in 1871 and became Vermeer's partner in the missionary work among the Javanese Christians of Sadrach's community. His relationship with the local Javanese leader however was cool and not friendly. When he came to Central Java, he saw that the charismatic leadership of Sadrach among the Javanese Christians was much more highly appreciated than the official position of the NGZV missionaries. The spiritual norms of the Javanese Christian communities were beyond his recognition of what ecclesial life should be. This tension eventually culminated in 1882, as the affair of vaccination had become a political issue (Guillot 1985, 104). In this issue, Bieger chose his position against Sadrach who was suppressed by the Dutch government in Purworejo. The suppression however came to the end very quickly, as Sadrach was sustained by the Supreme Court in Batavia. Bieger's position as the NGZV's missionary collapsed as he lost both official support from the government and spiritual recognition from the Javanese Christians. Therefore, in 1884, he went back to the Netherlands on furlough and left the NGZV in 1886. Subsequently, from 1887 to 1898, he became a NZG missionary (Reenders 2001, 859). He died in 1911 and was buried in Yogyakarta.

The fourth Reformed missionary in Tegal was Heinrich Friedrich Wilhelm Uhlenbusch (Reenders 2001, 872). He was born in 1841 and received his missionary training in Barmen in 1875. He was recruited by the NGZV and sent to Tegal in 1876. He replaced Vermeer in Purbolingo in 1877, but returned to Tegal in 1878, when he married Vasthi, a Javanese adopted child of Vermeer (Reenders 2001, 873). However, his spirit was weak as he could not manage his sexual desires. He committed adultery in the 1880s and was removed from his missionary position by the NGZV in 1885.

The fifth NGZV missionary in Central Java was Jacob Wilhelm (Reenders 2001, 875). He was born in 1854 and was refused admission by several mission bodies as a candidate. Eventually the NGZV accepted him. In this process, he was trained to be a teacher among the native people. He was sent by the NGZV to continue the missionary work of Vermeer, Stoové, and Bieger among the Javanese Christians in Central Java. Learning from his predecessors, he chose an alternative approach. He focused on the spiritual edification of the Javanese Christians, based on mutual relationship with the native people. He came to Purworejo, in the middle part of Central Java, in 1881. He saw how Bieger managed the issue of vaccination and found the deadlock in the situation because of the latter's conflict with Sadrach. He may have learned that the spiritual edification of the Javanese Christians cannot be managed by official force, but it should be cultivated culturally according to the Javanese way of life. Therefore, he chose to become Sadrach's friend and his love for the Javanese congregations gradually became deeper. When he finally saw the suppressive attitude of the NGZV secretary Lion Cachet, his heart broke and eventually he died in 1892. His life was

over, when the Javanese Christians were excommunicated by the NGZV. At the same time, the death of Jacob Wilhelm became a fatal moment for the NGZV. After the abortive effort to discharge Sadrach in 1892, the time of missionary work by the NGZV was over. It changed into another mission strategy in 1896, namely the missionary work of the local Reformed (*Gereformeerde*) churches in the Netherlands.

A new era for evangelism at Java arrived. It was accompanied with a new principle of evangelization: the mission work must be done by a local church in the Netherlands in order to create a native local church. In Central Java, the first Reformed missionary working according to this principle was Laurens Adriaanse (Reenders 2001, 856). He was born in 1856 and received his higher education at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. He was ordained as a Christian minister in Zeist in 1888, and called for missionary work in 1894. The local church of Utrecht dispatched him to Purworejo, where he did missionary work from 1895 to 1902. He wrote Sadrach's biography, entitled *Sadrach's kring* (Sadrach's community), which was published in Leiden in 1899. He also wrote a hymnal consisting of fourteen psalms in the form of Javanese *tembang* (Javanese poetry). He asked Sadrach to rebuild a mutual relationship with the *Gereformeerde* mission, but he failed as Sadrach had already received a significant position in the *Apostolische Kerk* (Apostolic Church). Accordingly, with the new principle of evangelization, he focused on the Javanese Christians who were willing to cooperate with the Reformed mission. In 1900, he ordained Javanese elders to start creating the local Javanese church in Purworejo and Temon. However, he was unable to continue this mission due to his poor health condition in 1901. He left Central Java in 1902 and became a school inspector and then a local politician in the Netherlands. He died in 1947, after having been the member of the commission for missionary work in the local church of Utrecht from 1904 to the end of his life.

When Adriaanse came to Java, he was accompanied by a physician committed for missionary work: Jan Gerrit Scheurer, known as Doctor Scheurer (Reenders 2001, 871). He was born in 1864 and received his medical training in London, from 1888 to 1892, in a missionary hospital belonging to the Medical Missionary Association at Home and Abroad. He was not a professional physician so to speak, but a medical person trained for missionary work. He was ordained to be a missionary physician by the classis of Rotterdam, and was sent to Java in 1893. After having obtained the diploma of "*Indisch arts*", he studied the Javanese language in Solo from 1895 to 1896. During this time, he also practiced his medical work in the city. In 1897, he started living in Yogyakarta. Being sustained by the Sultan of Yogyakarta, he created two missionary hospitals: the Petronella Hospital opened in 1900, the Tungkak Hospital for lepers opened in 1901. Unfortunately, because of his poor health condition, he had to leave the mission field in 1906 and return to the Netherlands. He continued his medical career and became a politician in the Dutch parliament as well as a trustee of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam until the end of his life.

When Adriaanse and Scheurer arrived in Java, there was a missionary teacher of the NGZV named Jacob Popkes Zuidema (Reenders 2001, 876). Born in 1860 hereceived his training to be a mission teacher of the UZV. He eventually worked for the NGZV and was sent to Java in 1887. He started working in Purworejo in 1888 and opened a mission school for the Javanese children in 1891. The name of the school was the Keuchenius School. He witnessed the case against Sadrach in 1892, and he had some knowledge about the difficult situation at the moment, when his mission school lost many of its Javanese pupils because of the conflict. Due to his health condition, he returned to the Netherlands from 1897 to 1899. He went back to the mission field in 1899 to continue his work for the Keuchenius School in Purworejo.

This school was eventually reorganized; it was relocated from Purworejo to Yogyakarta in 1905. The Keuchenius School in Yogyakarta was designed to create native paramedical staff for the new mission hospitals developed by Doctor Scheurer. Besides, this school had a supplementary class designed to create native church leaders. The supplementary class was later on recognized as the TOS (*Theologische Opleidings School*, Theological Training School). During this time, J.P. Zuidema became an active contributor to the developing process. He reorganized the Keuchenius School and from 1912 onwards he became one of the assisting teachers in the TOS as well as an administrator in the Petronella Hospital. He retired in 1924 and then dedicated his life as a proofreader of the Javanese Bible translation; also he was involved in the creation of the new mission school in Solo. Due to his health condition, he moved to Malang in 1927 and passed away five years later.

The reorganized Keuchenius School in Yogyakarta became a strategic learning source for the Javanese Christians. As we saw, this school had a supplementary program for the development of native leaders of the Javanese church. The supplementary program was provided by Dirk Bakker (Reenders 2001, 857), born in 1865 and graduated from the faculty of theology of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam in 1889. He was ordained to be a minister in Apeldoorn and then worked as a minister in the towns of Broek op Langedijk and of Sneek. Then he was appointed to be a missionary pastor by the local church of Heeg; he was sent to Central Java and arrived at Kebumen in 1900. Having worked in Kebumen from 1900 to 1906, he moved to Yogyakarta in order to develop the so-called the *tweede afdeling van de Keucheniusschool* (the second department of the KS, meaning the above-mentioned supplementary program). This program was popularly called *de Cursus Bakker*, because the course was facilitated by Dirk Bakker, and taught in Javanese language. The first group of this course, from 1906 to 1909, counted five graduates; the second was from 1909 to 1912 with four graduates. He served there until the end of the fifth course in 1921. In order to have access to broader theological resources, in 1925, the Cursus Bakker was then upgraded to become a “Hollandse Cursus” (meaning a theological course in Dutch language). During that time, Dirk Bakker dedicated his life to provide theological resource literature written in the Javanese language for the Javanese Christians. He had become the pioneer of theological education for the Javanese Christians, before his return to the Netherlands in 1930. He died in 1932, after having received an honorary doctorate from the Vrije Universiteit.

The theological work of Dirk Bakker was followed by his son, Frederik Lambertus Bakker, who also became a theologian for the Javanese Christians (Reenders 2001, 857). He was born in 1893 and earned his doctoral degree from the theological faculty of the Vrije Universiteit in 1922. He was appointed to be the mission consultant of the *Gereformeerde Deputaten voor de Zending* (the Reformed Deputies for the Mission), and he was ordained to be a Christian minister by the local church of Amsterdam in 1923. His mission was to develop the TOS of Yogyakarta. He developed a theological pattern of reflection, which regarded Islam as a significant context. Unfortunately, this program was obstructed by the Pacific War in 1942-1945, when he was taken into custody by the Japanese military administration in Indonesia. He returned to the Netherlands after the war, but he went back to Indonesia and dedicated his life as a missionary from 1947 to his retirement in 1951. After that, he worked in the Netherlands as the secretary for the foreign affairs of the *Nederlandse Zendings Raad* (the Missionary Council in the Netherlands). He died in 1971.

Besides F.L. Bakker, there was another son of the Bakker family who wanted to dedicate his life for the missionary work. This son had the same name as his father: Dirk Bakker (Reenders 2001, 857). Yet, where F.L. Bakker dedicated his life to theological work among

the Javanese Christians, Dirk Bakker Jr. committed his life to medical work among the native people. He was born in 1898 and studied medical science at the Universiteit van Amsterdam. After his graduation in 1924, he was ordained by the local church of Amsterdam to be a missionary physician in the Petronella Hospital in Yogyakarta. Subsequently, he became a part of the medical team in the Petronella Hospital from 1924 to 1926. After that, he was appointed to be the director of the Dr. Scheurer Hospital in Klaten, from 1926 to 1943. During the Pacific War, he was taken into custody by the Japanese military administration in Indonesia. After the war, he returned to the Netherlands in 1946 and worked as a physician in Hilversum. Nevertheless, his heart was full of love for the Javanese people, as he went back to Indonesia in 1953. He continued his work again as a missionary doctor in the Dr. Scheurer Hospital in Klaten and Solo from 1953 to 1961. Then, having returned to the Netherlands, he temporarily served in Ghana in the service of the Basler Mission. Bakker died in 1973.

The love of the Bakker family to the Javanese people was also reflected by the first Reformed missionary in Solo. Huibert Anthonie van Anandel was born in 1875 (Reenders 2001, 856). After having finished his theological education in Kampen and at the Vrije Universiteit, in 1900 he was ordained to be a Reformed minister in Zuidland. After that, in 1908, he served as a minister in Baarn. Then, in 1911, he was appointed by the local church of Amsterdam to be a missionary pastor in Solo, Central Java. He arrived at this Javanese city in the same year, but was rewarded a temporary leave due to his doctoral promotion at the Vrije Universiteit in June 1912. His dissertation reflected his faithfulness to the Reformed principle as to missionary work, as he wrote about the theology of the seventeenth century theologian and missionary teacher Gisbertus Voetius. Subsequently, Van Anandel continued his missionary work in Solo from 1912 to 1942 when he was taken into custody by the Japanese military administration in Indonesia during the Pacific War. He died in a prisoners' camp at March 27, 1945, in Semarang.

Van Anandel was blessed by the Lord, as He gave him a talented wife Jacqueline Cornélie Rutgers (Reenders 2001, 870-871; Van der Woerd 2004, 25). She was born in 1874 of a prominent family and had an excellent educational record. In 1893 she received her diploma to become a school teacher. In 1896 she was part of the famous Middelburg Synod. In 1897 she worked with J.H. Kuyper to found an association in behalf of the Dr. Scheurer Hospital. From 1897 to 1899 she was trained in the paramedical school "La Source" in Lausanne. From 1900 to 1907 she worked as a head nurse in the Petronella Hospital in Yogyakarta. Then, from 1907 to 1910 she studied the Arabic and Javanese languages in Leiden and became the editor of the *Nederlandsche Zendingsjaarboekje* (the Dutch Mission Yearbook). In 1910, adopting the thought of W.H.T. Gairdner developed in *The Reproach of Islam*, she translated his work for Dutch readers (*Islam en Christendom*). In 1911, she worked again in the Petronella Hospital as a missionary nurse sent by the local church of Amsterdam. Then, in 1912, she married H.A. van Anandel and after that assisted the missionary work of her husband in Solo by organizing evangelism via pamphlets and administering Christian schools for the native people. In 1917, she co-founded an organization for Javanese women called *Boedi Wanita* (Women's Aspiration, meaning to improve women's dignity morally, culturally, intellectually). In 1928, she took part in the international missionary conference in Jerusalem. During the Pacific War, she was taken into custody by the Japanese military administration in Indonesia. After that, she returned to the Netherlands in 1946, after her husband had died in a prison camp. She died in 1951.

From the above mentioned life stories, it can be summarized that the Reformed spirituality was revealed by the European missionaries in many ways. In the history of the Reformed

mission, the institutional mission body changed from being an independent organization into an organism of local churches. While the first had maintained a strictly Western approach in the mission field, the latter gave much room to the local aspiration and to the effort of contextualization without destroying the common rule which became the coordinating principle for the whole organism of the church and evangelism.

A critical note as to this approach is the fact that the organization of local Javanese churches was in need of a political backup from the colonial government. In this case, the growth of the Reformed mission church was in line with the political interest of the colonial government. Somehow, the Dutch colonialism had made the Reformed mission into a strategic political instrument to reshape the civilization of the native people in the colony.

Reformed Spirituality According to the Mission Norms in the Netherlands

The Principles of Middelburg 1896

How can the Reformed spirituality be traced in the principles stated by the synod of Middelburg 1896? First of all, the synod taught that the supreme value of its mission is the idea of God's sovereignty. This supreme value is the core of the Reformed spirituality believing that everything in the world comes from God, exists through God, and is destined to the glory of God. In this principle, historical reality is seen as the product of interpenetration of two realms: namely of the kingdom of nature and of the kingdom of grace. In these interpenetrating realms the sovereignty of God is manifested by the dialectical movement between the world of human rational-exploration and the world of divine mysteries. The Reformed faith believes that, in this dialectical movement, both in times of consolation and of darkness, humanity will grow as the fruit of the divine grace of God who rules the whole universe according to his divine majesty.

Het begin, en dus ook het beginsel, voor alle ding, en zoo ook voor den arbeid der Zending, ligt in God, die den hemel en de aarde geschapen, en ook het rijk der genade uit Zijnen raad heeft voortgebracht. In verband hiermede ligt de scherp geteekende karaktertrek, die de Gereformeerde belijdenis van andere onderscheidt, hierin, dat zij dit beginsel niet alleen uitspreekt, maar het ook als beginsel op geheel haar terrein tot heerschappij laat komen, in wat we eeren als *de souvereiniteit Gods*, die te erkennen als denoorsprong, den weg en het einddoel zoo van het rijk der natuur als van het rijk der genade, en beider onderling verband.

The beginning and the principle of everything, and therefore also of the work of the *Zending* [i.e. mission] is in God who has created heaven and earth and who also has brought forth the kingdom of grace by his decision. In this connection, the sharply defined character of the Reformed confession, through which it distinguishes itself from other confessions, is that it not only pronounces this principle, but also relates it to every domain on earth, which we honour as the sovereignty of God which is the source, the way, and the purpose of the inseparable kingdom of nature and of grace. (Reenders 2001, 237)

Based on this core principle, the synod of Middelburg then stated six values of the Reformed missionary endeavor. These values concern (1) the highest purpose of the mission of evangelization, (2) the sender, (3) the sent ones, (4) the receiver, (5) the mission's management, and (6) the mission's network.

Firstly, regarding the question about the very ground of missionary endeavor, the Middelburg Synod stated that the work of the missionary is inseparable from the activity of the Holy

Trinity. The Reformed Confession believes God is the Trinity. This points to the creator of the heaven and earth, who will not abandon the work of his hands; God is the creator of the universe who is always abiding among his creatures. Because of the activity of God the Trinity, human beings are created, redeemed, and sanctified toward a promising future. They are created by the will of the Father; they are redeemed by the obedience of the Son; and they are sanctified toward a promising future by the wonderful activity of the Holy Spirit. Because God is working in a Trinitarian way, human history constantly manifests the story of God who gives his divine salvation to humanity. In this case, the doctrine of the Trinity is not a polytheistic belief but a monotheism that believes in God who will always dwell in the human world. In this belief, the sovereignty of God is perceived to be the salvation of human beings. God's glory is revealed in the human struggle against the power of sin, which includes the endeavor of bringing back the lost people into the communion with God. In this train of thought, the Reformed Confession committed to the doctrine of the Trinity would imply serious dedication to the missionary endeavor, as the synod says:

Het *hoogste einde* van alle ding ligt, naar luid onzer Gereformeerde Belijdenis, in God Drieëinig. Hij heeft alle ding geschapen om zich zelfswille. Alle dingen zijn tot Hem. Ook het einddoel der Zending mag uit dien hoofde niet anders verstaan, dan dat het gelegen is in haar bestemming om *God te verheerlijken*. Want wel komt die verheerlijking het duidelijkst uit, waar ze tot de redding van verlorenen leidt en alzoo den wonderlijken rijkdom van de genade en ontfermingen Gods doet schitteren, maar toch mag het doel der Zending daartoe niet bepaald. . . .

Is naar onze belijdenis geen ding in 's menschen hand gesteld, dan opdat hij 'daarin zijn God zou dienen' en is hiermee het diepste motief van alle religie tot uitgangspunt voor al 's menschen doen gesteld, zoo volgt hieruit, dat de vreeze des Heeren ook bij de zending de bewegende kracht moet zijn, en dat God hierin te dienen, ziende in het gebod en blind voor de uitkomst, de leidende gedachte bij heel dezen arbeid moet blijven. (Reenders 2001, 237-238)

English Translation of the quotation:

The highest purpose of all things lays in God the Trinity, as it is claimed by our Reformed Confession. He has created all things according to his own will. All things are destined to Him. Then the purpose of the Zending [i.e. the mission body] should not be understood other than that it is her goal to glorify God. Although this glorifying God is most clearly shown by the salvation of the lost human beings manifesting the wonderful richness of God's grace and mercy, the target of the Zending may not be limited to just this. [...]

Isn't it so, that according to our confession everything is to man's determination to serve God? This is the deepest motif of all religion by which the basic principle of man's effort is defined; and therefore the fear of God should become the driving force of the mission. Here God is to be served, as we see only the command to obey and not the result. In other words, this should be the leading principle of all this effort.

Secondly, regarding the legitimacy of missionary endeavor, the synod of Middelburg was confronting a question: under whose authority and power should the missionary endeavor be done? This question was elaborated by pointing to the core principle of the Reformed Confession. In this core, the Reformed faith believes that everything must be put in relation to God's Sovereignty presenting himself to the human world which is always: in Christ, by the power of the Spirit, through the church. Christ, after his ascension to heaven, has made the church to be his continuing presence in the human world. Likewise, by the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ's authority and power are continued in the mission of his Church. The church manifests the authority and power of Christ who reveals God's Sovereignty in the world of human beings, when she exercises her missionary duty.

Even so, Christ's representation in the church must be found not by claiming the existence of the mystical-and-universal Church but by pointing to the fact of visible-but-particular

churches. Accordingly, regarding the missionary endeavor, the synod stated that the one who should exercise the authority and power of Christ is the institutionalized-local church experienced by the believers in daily world. The authority and power of Christ for the missionary endeavor are represented not by the invisible-universal Church but by the existing local-institutionalized churches, as the Middelburg Synod says:

Is onder zending, in engeren zin, te verstaan, het doen uitgaan van een redelijk wezen, om aan zondaren, die in dood en duisternis verzonken zijn, de waarheid en den wille Gods, bijzonderlijk zijne genade in Christus, bekend te maken, hetzij opdat dit alle onschuld beneme, zoo moet, nu het hoogste einde vaststaat, in de tweede plaats onderzocht, wie *autoriteit en macht bezit, om aldus te zenden*. Hierop kan wie de Souvereiniteit Gods belijdt, niet anders antwoorden, dan dat deze autoriteit en deze macht eeniglijk in God zelve rust, en alleen in zooverre aan een mensch of aan een lichaam van menschen kan toekomen, zoo God die autoriteit uitdrukkelijk verleent. Die autoriteit en macht nu heeft God zelf vele malen rechtstreeks uitgeoefend door het uitzenden van engelen of getuigen, en centraal door het uitzenden van zijn Zoon. De Christus is door God verordineerd gezalfd tot onzen hoogsten profeet en leeraar.[...]

Zowel door den last van Matth. 28:19, als door de daad van den Heiligen Geest te Antiochië, staat het alzo vast, dat de Christus, uit den hemel, thans zendt door de zending van zijne Kerk, en dat alleen de Kerk hiertoe macht en autoriteit van Christus' wege bezit. De vraag eindelijk of hiermede de Kerk als gezamenlijk begrip of wel de geïnstitueerde plaatselijke Kerk bedoeld is, is hiermede tevens beantwoord. Niet de algemeene Kerk *doopt*, maar alleen de plaatselijke geïnstitueerde. En voorts volgt hetzelfde uit het begrip van Kerk als *zoodanig*. Volgens onze Belijdenis is de Kerk eene *vergadering van geloovigen*. *Geloovigen* nu zijn wel geestelijk over heel de wereld, maar institutair alleen plaatselijk *vergaderd*. En wel leven deze Kerken groepsgewijze, in onderscheiden landen, in kerkverband, en komen saam in vergaderingen van meerdere Kerken, maar deze Classicale of Synodale vergaderingen bezitten als *zoodanig* nooit eenige macht of autoriteit, dan die door de plaatselijke Kerken daarin wordt meegebracht. Zegt men nu, dat de plaatselijke Kerken geen autoriteit tot den Zending bezitten, dan kunnen ook deze Classicale of Synodale vergaderingen er nooit aan komen. (Reenders 2001, 238-239)

English translation of the quotation:

In order to bring back the unfortunate sinners who were sunken into darkness and death to the true will of communion with God, especially to acquaint them with his grace in Jesus so as to remove all innocence, we should ask secondly as a rational being, *under whose authority and power* will that kind of endeavor be exercised? Here, the one who believes in God's Sovereignty will say that there will be no power or authority outside God himself. The authority and power can only be found in man or a group of people where God's authority placed it. This happens when God sends his angels or witnesses, and above all when God sends his Son. By God himself, Christ has been ordained and anointed to be our highest prophet and teacher.[...]

Regarding both the last part of Matthew 28:19 and the work of the Holy Spirit in Antioch, it is firmly stated that, out of the heaven, Christ is sending [his envoys] through the mission of the Church. Therefore, the authority and power of Christ is continued by Christ himself through the mission of his Church. Eventually, the question ensuing whether the character of this Church is universal or particular is hereby answered. The fact is that only the local-institutionalized Church *baptizes* people not the church in general. According to our confession, the church is a gathering of believers. Believers are found in the whole world in spirit, but institutionally only gathered locally. Therefore, it is the local-institutionalized Church that has the authority and power of Christ's missionary endeavor. Although the local-institutionalized churches are in cooperation within Classis or Synod, the Classis and Synod themselves do not have any other power and authority than that given to them by the particular local-institutionalized churches. If one says that the local-institutionalized churches do not have any power and authority to mission, than surely also the Classis or Synod do not.

Thirdly, regarding the question about persons who will be sent into the mission field, the Middelburg's Synod taught that the presence of the local-institutionalized local churches is

manifested by people who are ordained for ecclesiastical offices. These people present the service of the church: namely, the ministry of the Word and the administration of Sacraments being fenced and protected by the execution of church's discipline. Through the ordained ministers in the church, Christ presents the heavenly power of the key among his people, pointing to the pastoral authority given to the apostle Peter (Matthew 16:19). This would imply that the one being eligible to be sent as a missionary is the one who has been ordained by the church for ecclesiastical office. To be specific, the synod stated that, in order to be sent as a missionary, one should/must have been an ordained minister who might legitimately serve the ministry of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments. The synod says:

Staat aldus vast dat God zendt door den Christus, en de Christus, eerst door zijne apostelen, en nu door zijne Kerk, alsmede dat de Kerk alleen plaatselijk geïnstitueerd, en dus tot zenden bekwaam is, zoo, volgt hieruit tevens, dat de te zenden personen, personen *in het ambt* moeten zijn. Wel kan de Kerk allerlei werk door niet ambtelijke personen doen verrichten, hetzij op paedagogisch, medisch, bouwkundig, juridisch of financieel gebied, maar bij de bediening van de Tucht, kortom by de hanteering van de sleutelen des hemelrijks is zij én hier én overal, *aan het ambt gebonden*. . . . Is hiermede uitgemaakt, dat de Kerken niet anders mogen zenden dan de personen in het ambt zijnde, zoo volgt tevens, dat deze personen moeten zijn Dienaren des Woords, overmits onze Kerkenordening, conform aan de Heilige Schrift, alleen deze machtigt om het Woord en Sacramenten te bedienen. (Reenders 2001, 241)

English translation of the quotation:

It is thus stated firmly that God sent his apostles, through and by Christ, and now through his church as it becomes the local-institutionalized church. This implies that one cannot be sent as a missionary unless he is *ordained* for an ecclesiastical office. Of course, the church can be represented by non-ordained persons in many ministerial fields such as educational as well as medical, architectural, legal, or financial ministries; but, in order to exercise church's discipline, namely to exercise here and above all the power of the heavenly keys, only *ordained ministers* are legitimately capable of doing so. [...] Since it is herewith firmly stated that the churches may not send other persons than those who have been ordained, it follows that these persons should be ministers of the Word, because our Church Order in accordance with the Holy Scriptures, only authorizes these persons to minister Word and Sacrament.

Fourthly, the synod taught that the missionary endeavor is not only for the salvation of individual lives but also of their civilization. According to the Reformed belief in the sovereignty of God, the synod has recognized the importance of human institutions. The Holy Trinity works in human history, presenting the local-institutionalized churches facilitated by ecclesiastical offices and ministers. They exist to be Christ's continuing mission, searching for the elected people of God. The divine election, that manifests the sovereignty of God, is always situated before the missionary endeavor of the church. By doing mission, the church is following Christ in the world in order to reveal the work of the Holy Trinity among human beings. In this position, the missionary endeavor is always behind the work of God and not *vice versa*.

Reflecting upon the fact of the Dutch colonization in Indonesia, the Middelburg's synod believes that the Indonesian social reality is representing the will of God that should be carefully noticed by the church. The place for the Reformed mission is Central Java, which was the central position of Indonesian civilization at that time. In this case, the Reformed missionary endeavor should target the Javanese people not only in terms of persons but also of a nation. The Reformed mission should not do an atomistic missionary endeavor, which is focused on personal piety, but should manage missionary work for the improvement of Javanese civilization. The central position of this civilization should always be the main concern of the missionary endeavor, as the synod says:

Juist die band tusschen natuur en genade maakt intusschen, dat niet alle creatuur ons even bijzonder is aangewezen, nu onder Gods bestel eene bevolking van bij de dertig millioenen aan ons volk in koloniaal bezit is toevertrouwd. Vanzelf ligt de roeping onzer kerken allereerst in Oost- en in West-Indië. Maar ook op dat terrein is niet elke groep menschen even belangrijk. Eene zending in het hart van Borneo zou minder inwerken op heel onze koloniale bevolking dan eene zending op Java. Hoe meer op het middenpunt van onze koloniën gewerkt wordt, hoe krachtiger onze invloed zal zijn. Ook dit nu is onder Gods bestel alzoo. Hij heeft die natiën over de eilanden van den archipel verdeeld; en de eene natie meer achteraf, de andere, meer invloedrijk, op den voorgrond geplaatst. De aanwijzing voor onze kerken is daarop ongetwijfeld, om haar hoofdkracht op het hoofdvolk te richten. . . .

Paulus gaat dan ook niet te Athene elken Griek thuis op zoeken, maar wendt zich *tot het volk* op den Areopagus Iets waaruit voor ons de regel volgt, dat wij niet volstaan kunnen met eenige schuilende Javanen in hun dessa op te zoeken, maar dat wij ons minstens evenzoo *tot het volk* in zijn middenpunt, in zijne leidslieden, in zijne hoofden en geledingen hebben te wenden. Atomistische zending werkt alleen op die enkele, nu levende personen; een zending die zich ook *op het volk* richt, zet het volksbewustzijn om , verandert de gezindheden en draagt vruchten voor de toekomst. (Reenders 2001, 244)

English Translation of the quotation:

As grace and nature are undivided, so is the fact that—among other creatures—God gives us special intention by which about thirty million people are trusted under our colonial administration. Of course, the primary call of our churches is to be found in the East- and West-Indies. However, even in that territory not all people are of equal importance. A mission in the heartlands of Borneo would have less influence on the whole of our colonial population than a mission on Java. The more we work in the center of our colonies, the stronger will be our influence. This is also under God's arrangement. Over different islands, He has put the nations in different positions of influence, some more in the background, others with more influence in the foreground. This undoubtedly points to the direction that our churches should focus its main force on the most important nation. [...]

Paul did not go to Athens to meet individual Greeks in their homes, but addressed himself *to the nation* on the Areopagus. From this fact, the norm follows for us that it is not sufficient that we visit some Javanese people who seek shelter in their villages, but we must as much meet *the nation* at its center, that is, their leaders, their chiefs and their ranks or circles. We should not see our missionary endeavor as an atomistic evangelization, only for a few individuals who live now. We must work our missionary endeavor to change the direction of the life of *the nation*, by improving the quality of its consciousness and character, so that—by doing so—our mission may bear fruit in the future.

Fifthly, regarding its management in relation to the government, the synod said that the missionary endeavor should be in the service of the Kingdom of Christ which is always in-the-world but not of-the-world. In this sense, according to the Reformed faith, the existence of Christ's Kingdom should not be managed by the state claiming its power over spiritual matters *ius in sacra* (i.e. sacred law). To be sure, the Kingdom of Christ must not be controlled by the state, as it should be experienced by the believers as the Word of God which effectively governed their consciousness. In other words, the Kingdom of Christ cannot be controlled by the state as it is grounded in the spiritual realm of the individuals in society. Likewise, before the sovereignty of God, no government may claim any right to control individual consciousness so that the state has to protect the existence of human rights which is the channel of God's realm in the human world.²⁰ Through human rights, personal obedience of the believers might be manifested publicly and by so doing it reveals the dynamics of God's presence through human instruments in history. In this train of thought, for the Reformed tradition, public confession of faith becomes inevitable in the life of the church. Therefore, the missionary endeavor that should be done by the Reformed churches

²⁰In the synod of Middelburg (1896), the idea of human rights had not been recognized as it was born after the World War II (1945). However, as the history of the Reformed tradition grew in a lot of struggle for creating peace in pluralistic societies, it seems that the idea of state's duty to guarantee the human individual consciousness has been regarded since the Reformation.

must not only create Christian individuals in Java but put the Javanese Christians who have the capacity to articulate their public confession of faith in front of the Indonesian society. The Reformed missionary endeavor should be managed according to several determinations. As for the first determination, the Reformed churches should not forget their duty to cultivate further the realities of divine grace shaping the history of Christianity; and this means that their missionary endeavor should do their best to bring not only a new religion but also a better social condition for the poor Javanese society. As for the second, the fruit of missionary endeavor should not only be to the benefit of the elite but also to the advantage of the whole Javanese people. As for the third, the missionary administration should empower the Javanese Christians to manage their pastoral capacity to get rid of false religion.²¹ As for the *fourth*, the historical-cultural background of the Dutch Reformed missionary should not dominate the Javanese Christians in their effort to make significant contribution to the development of the Indonesian society; the Javanese Christians should be able to develop their own Eastern spirituality in their songs, in their way of praying, and in their way of having confessions of faith formulated by themselves with regard to their own historical existence. As for the *fifth*, the missionary endeavor should guarantee the financial support for their employees. As for the *sixth*, the new missionary effort should be done in cooperation with the Reformed churches which have already been established in Indonesia at that moment because presumably these churches were trusted by the Javanese people. As for the *seventh*, despite the serious effort that would have been done by the missionary endeavor, when it would be clear that the gospel was rejected by the Javanese people, then the sending churches should shake off the dust of the island from their feet which means that they should leave the people into their own fate and move to another place that will be appointed later on by the Holy Spirit. As for the *eighth*, the missionary endeavor is not only about preaching but also baptizing, so that it always implies the effort of church-planting and the existence of ordained ministers. The financial burden for this effort should not weigh upon the missionaries but become the responsibility of the sending church. As for the *ninth*, accordingly, for the future Javanese church, it is important to create a training program for the leaders of Javanese Christians as soon as possible. As for the *tenth*, therefore, the hitherto mission school, namely the Keuchenius School, should be organized in a new way to produce nurses, catechists, and teachers. As for the *eleventh*, as the missionary endeavor is serving the Kingdom of Christ, they should always remember not to subordinate the Javanese people but to be in meaningful cooperation with them so that the native people might clearly understand about the kingship of Jesus among them. Eventually, as for the *twelfth*, as the biblical principle states that Christ is neither Jew nor Greek, the Christian believers in Java should not be discriminated racially but must work for unity and ecumenism despite their diversity in faith-confession, church-order, and language. Regarding those values, the synod says:

Ook voor wat aangaat de methode der zending, staat de beslissing niet aan menselijke willekeur, maar is de Souvereiniteit Gods te eerbiedigen in zijn onderscheidenlijk bestel. Zending met geweld is reeds daarom uitgesloten. Geweld te oefenen is zeker plicht der overheid op haar terrein, maar de kerk is van andere natuur dan de burgerstaat. Jezus' koninkrijk is niet van deze wereld. Zijne dienaren mogen niet met het zwaard voor Hem strijden. En ook mag de overheid zich niet op het erf der kerk begeven. Het ius in sacra komt haar niet toe.[...]

Onze zendingsmethode mag geen andere zijn, dan die van *overtuigen*; door dit overtuigen wie niet gelooft, tot *geloof* brengen; en die aldus als geloovigen openbaar worden, vergaderen in *kerken*. Deze algemene regel vereischt intusschen velerlei nadere bepaling.

²¹ The idea of false religion is characteristically Calvinistic, as John Calvin promoted the perpetual struggle of the church for a commitment to true religion of the Gospel against the strong temptation of idolatry in the world (e.g. Inst. 1.4.3, Inst. 1.6.2, Inst. 1.11.9, Inst. 1.12.1, Inst. 2.8.16, Inst. 2.8.17, Inst. 2.15.1, Inst. 3.9.4, Inst. 4.6.2, Inst. 4.10.28, Inst. 4.15.18, and Inst. 4.20.3).

- (1) Onze Gereformeerden leeren allerwege eene *voorbereidende genade*. Niet alsof ooit eenige voorbereiding allengs het leven in den dood kon doen ontstaan; maar in dien zin, dat de geesten voorbereid worden, om, als God het leven schenkt, snel tot rijp en helder geloof te komen. [...]
- (2) Omdat, gelijk boven is aangetoond, de zending zich niet enkel op de volksleden maar ook op het volksgeheel heeft te richten, is het plicht de valsche religie, die men bij een volk vindt, als zoodanig in haar beginselen aan te tasten, in haar hoofdstellingen te bestrijden, en in haar geestelijke levenskracht te weerstaan. [...]
- (3) Juist omdat de christelijke religie niet eene plaats inneemt naast andere valsche religiën, maar optreedt als die eenig ware religie, die beantwoordt aan de ordinantie Gods in de Schepping van het menschelijk geslacht, meegerekend de vervalsching van die ordinantie in bijgeloof en afgoderij, moet den Javaan niet het christelijk kleed over, of in plaats van zijn Islamitisch kleed, worden aangetrokken; maar moet door zijne eigen valsche religie heen doorgedrongen tot datgene wat in zijn eigen hart, als onderstelling van de christelijke religie, uitgangspunt voor den missionairen arbeid moet zijn; niet alleen tot 'het zaad van de Godsdienst', het semen religionis in hem, maar ook tot de ware elementen, waarvan de Islam de vervalsching is.
- (4) Onze Gereformeerde kerken in Nederland bezitten een westersch, en ten deele ook een national karakter, dat ook in de vormen der belijdenis, en tot in taal en woordenkeuze uitkomt. Overmits nu God niet alle volken eender schiep, maar den Javaan anders dan ons, oostersch in wijze van voorstelling; hem op geheel anderen trap van ontwikkeling plaatste; en hem een ander verleden gaf, mag nimmer de eisch gesteld, dat hij onze vormen overneme, maar moet uit den boezem zelf van het bekeerde deel der Javanen, die oostersche vorm voor lied, gebed en belijdenis opkomen, die bij zijne existentie past. [...]
- (5) De Christus zond zijne apostelen uit zonder male of buidel; en ook Paulus had geen vast traktement, maar zond veeleer uit de nieuw gestichte kerken gaven naar de verarmde zusterkerken in Palestina. Ook al is dit in dien strengen zin thans niet toepasselijk, zoo volgt er toch de regel uit, dat verkeerd doet, wie alles door macht van geld om niet brengt. [...] Onze kerken zullen daarom hebben toe te zien, dat zij ook in dit opzicht eigen paden kiezen; altoos echter met dien verstande dat de kerken die zenden, aansprakelijk blijven voor den dienaar dien zij zenden.
- (6) Overmits allerlei onzuivere en onware verschijningsvormen van de christelijke kerk op of nabij het zendingsveld optreden, is het van het hoogste belang, dat ook *de ware kerk* van Christus in of nabij het arbeidsveld onder Europeanen tot openbaring kome. Kerken als te Batavia en Soerabaja gesticht werden, hebben [...] voor de zending zeer ernstige beteekenis, mits zij dan ook eene eere van Christus zijn, en men den Javaan met goed vertrouwen op deze kerken, in onderscheiding van andere, kunnen wijzen.
- (7) Indien na goede voorbereiding, en na volhardende zending gedurende geruimen tijd, blijkt dat op eenig terrein geen geloovigen openbaar worden, behooren onze kerken gedachtig te zijn, aan Jezus' last, om het stof van de voeten af te schudden, én opdat de zending niet tot eene bespotting werden, én opdat andere oorden er niet van verstoken blijven. [...]
- (8) Overmits de zending niet alleen last tot prediking, maar ook tot doopen inhoudt, moet zij, zoodra meerdere gelovigen openbaar worden, en de kracht hiertoe aanwezig blijkt, tot *kerkstichting* leiden, moeten in deze kerken de ambten ingesteld, en door hen, die die ambten bekleeden, Woord en Sacrament bediend, en tucht geoefend, en de dienst der barmhartigheid openbaar worden. Ook de dienaar des Woords van zulk eene kerk is dan dienaar van die kerk, haar geleend, of door haar in het ambt gesteld, en geheel van den kerkeraad afhangende. Een gezondene dienaar des Woords, die deze kerk hielp stichten, kan niet tegelijk haar dienaar en die van zijne zendende kerk zijn. En ook de financiële steun aan hem geboden moet dan, bij leening, niet aan hem, maar aan zijne kerk gezonden worden.
- (9) Het meest gewenscht is echter, dat zoo spoedig mogelijk een dienaar beroepen worde uit de inlandsche geloovigen; en althans in den aanvang zou opleiding van deze dienaren hier te lande, zoo al geen eisch, dan toch zeer gewenscht zijn. In Indië kunnen zij die opleiding vooralsnog niet ontvangen.
- (10) Bij de zending mag men zich, gelijk hier te lande bij den dienst des Woords, ook van helpende personen bedienen. Deze kunnen in Indië op de Keucheniusschool worden opgeleid, maar mogen nooit als ambtelijke personen worden beschouwd. [...]

(11) Overmits elke plaatselijke kerk, ook op Java, in zich zelve compleet is, en rechtstreeks onder Koning Jezus staat, mag de zendende kerk, als moederkerk, zulk eene kerk op Java wel steunen en raden, maar zich nooit eenige autoriteit over haar aanmatigen. De Javaansche kerk is met ons gecoördineerd, niet aan ons gesubordineerd. En

(12) daar er in Christus is noch Jood noch Griek, en dus ook noch Javaan noch Nederlander, moeten de geloovigen op Java, van wat ras of natie ook, in ééne kerk saamleven, en mag alleen verschil in belijdenis, kerkregeering en taal hen scheiden. (Reenders 2001, 244-248)

English Translation of the quotation:

Also, regarding the way of proceeding in missionary endeavors, it should be stated that one should rely on the sovereignty of God and not on the arbitrariness of man. Missionary endeavor with violence is unacceptable. Exercising coercive force is the realm of the government, whose nature is different from the church. The Kingdom of Christ is not of this world. His servants may not fight for him with the sword. Likewise, the government should not get involved in the ministry of the church. The political idea of *ius in sacra* [authority in sacred affairs] does not belong to her. [...] The method of our missionary endeavor is only relying on the act of *convincing*. Without any pressure, convince those who are unbelievers to start to *believe*, and gather those, who have openly become believers, in *churches*. This method implies several determinations:

(1) Our Reformed tradition teaches about a *preparatory grace*. Not that any preparation could evergradually bring into being a life after death; but such a preparation can prepare the spirits to obtain a mature and bright faith rapidly, provided God gives life. [...]

(2) Since, as has been shown above, the missionary endeavor is not only designated to the individual members of a nation but also to the whole of society, it is a duty to attack the principles of false religion, which are found in a nation, to combat its main propositions and to resist its spiritual forces of life. [...]

(3) Since the Christian religion does not take a place next to other, false, religions, but presents itself as the sole true religion, manifesting God's ordinance in the Creation of the human race, taking into account the forgery of this ordinance within superstition and idolatry, we should not cover the Javanese people with a Christian garment over or instead of his Islamic garment, but we have to penetrate his false religion and bring into his own heart that, which has to be the assumption of the Christian religion and the starting point of the missionary work; not only bring to him 'the seed of Religion', the *semen religionis* within him, but also the true elements of which the Islam is a forgery.

(4) Our Reformed churches in the Netherlands live in a world with a western and partly ~~its~~ national character which is evident in its confession of faith, as well as in its language and manner of speaking. Since God did not create all people in the same way, but constructed the Javanese different from us, eastern in its representation and having a different phase of development; and a different past, we never are allowed to request that he take on our forms [of Christianity], and they have to find their own way to express their Christian faith, which manifests itself in their eastern form of songs, in their prayers, and in their way of creating their own confession of faith according to their Javanese existence.

(5) Christ sent the apostles without money or financial guarantee; and also Paul worked without any fixed salary, but he rather managed that the newly established churches [which were financially strong] might become of help to their poorer sister churches in Palestine [which were financially weak]. Even though we cannot apply this principle in its most rigid form, nevertheless its consequence is the rule, that he is wrong, who by the power of money brings everything free of charge. [...] For that reason, our churches should see that they choose their own path in this respect as well; however, the sending churches remain responsible to give financial support to their missionaries.

(6) Forasmuch as all kinds of impure and untrue phenomena of the Christian church occur on or in the vicinity of the mission field, it is very important, that also the *true church* of Christ becomes manifest in or near the working area of Europeans. From this perspective, churches, such as the ones founded in Batavia and Soerabaya, have a very important meaning for the mission, at least as long as they are in honor of Christ, and as long as the Javanese people can be referred to these churches in good confidence, in distinction to other churches,.

(7) If, after a good preparation and persevering mission during a considerable period, it becomes clear that there are no public believers coming into in a certain area, our churches have to remember Jesus' commission that one should shake off the dust on one's feet, both to avoid the mission becoming an object of mockery and to make it possible that other areas do not remain devoid of mission work.

(8) Because the mission is not only committed to preach but also to baptize, she should include the effort of *church-planting*, as soon as a sufficient number of believers is becoming manifest and the force to do so, is present. Also church-offices have to be instituted, and by those, who hold such offices, the ministry of the Word and Sacrament exerted, next to church discipline and the service of charity. Subsequently, the Minister of the Word of such a church, is the servant of this church, lent by her or installed by her and responsible towards the Church board.. A sent Minister of the Word, who assisted in founding this church, cannot at the same time be a servant of this church and of the sending church. Also, the financial support given to him, should not be given to him but to this church, as a loan.

(9) However, the most desirable thing is that there would be an ordained minister coming from the native believers as soon as possible; and for that purpose, it would be a requirement or at least advisable, that the training of these future ministers, takes place in our country. For the time being, in the East Indies [Indonesia], there is no possibility for such training.

(10) As is the case here in our own country, at the mission field one can look for assistants in the service of the Word. These native assistants can be trained in the East Indies [Indonesia] at the Keuchenius School; however, they cannot be considered as ordained persons. [...]

(11) Because each local church, also in Java, is in itself complete and is directly under the rule of King Jesus, the sending church, which has become the mother church, can provide financial and managerial support, but does not have any authority over her. The Javanese church is not subordinated under us, but she is just coordinated with us.

(12) Since in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, and consequently neither Javanese nor Dutch; the believers in Java should live together in one church, coming from whatever race or nation, and they become different from us only in matters of local-church-confession, church policy, and language.

In the above principles, the Reformed principle about the sovereignty of God is reflected as a justification for colonialism. This is due to the fact that colonialism became a modern political terminology at that time, which probably gave a sense of emancipation like the idea of democracy in the second half of the twentieth century. Yet, the principle of God's sovereignty also reveals the conservative position of the Middelburg synod. In the late-nineteenth-century Netherlands, when the Reformed party was gradually becoming stronger and stronger, it seems that the reflection on God's sovereignty created both a spiritual and a political awareness among Dutch Christians. They saw that the Netherlands-Indies were entrusted by God to the Dutch administration in order to manifest a degree of divine will in human history. In this sense, the Dutch government in the Netherlands-Indies and other social organizations in the country were not only seen as political entities but as spiritual ones.

In that context, *sixthly*, the missionary endeavor is put into a position which includes four principles: (1) it cooperates with the government as far as the state does not act in opposition to God's ordinances on the church; (2) it maintains a friendly relationship with other churches; (3) it is also affable to other mission bodies working in Java; and (4) it is willing to work for an equal and ecumenical relationship with churches whose confessions of faith are good.

(1) *Met de overheid.* Ook in het werk der zending hebben de zendende kerken de overheid op haar terrein te eren, en, voor zooverre dit niet in conflict komt met haar roeping, de regeling der overheid te volgen. Ook die overheid is dienaar van dien zelfden God, in wiens naam de zending optreedt, en daarom

heeft ook de zending in alle ding dat niet tegen Gods ordinantiën voor de kerk en hare zending ingaat, te gehoorzamen. . . . (2) *Met andere kerken*. De Gereformeerde belijdenis handhaaft ook bij afzonderlijke groepeerings van kerken nochtans de eenheid van het lichaam van Christus en dus voor geïnstitueerde kerken den plicht tot correspondentie met buitenlandsche kerken van gelijke belijdenis. Deze correspondentie behoort met name op het gebied der zending geoefend te worden, vooral waar men op nabij elkander gelegen terrein werkt. (3) *Met andere zendingsstations*. Naar onze Indiën zenden niet alleen onze kerken, maar ook andere kerken en genootschappen dienaren uit. Dit stelt den dubbelen eisch, dat enerzijds niet door ons toedoen het ware en valsche in de schatting van den Javaan dooreenvloeie; maar ook anderzijds, dat de catholiciteit in den Doop niet door ons gekrenkt worde. . . . (4) *Met de kerken van goede belijdenis in Indië*. Met deze kerken kan niet anders worden aangegaan dan correspondentie of kerkverband; waarvoor afzonderlijke regelen zijn vast te stellen, maar zonder dat onze kerken zich daardoor eenig oppergezag over deze kerken aanmatigen. (Reenders 2001, 248)

English translation of the quotation:

(1) *Relationship with the government*. In our missionary endeavor, the sending churches have to honour the government in her realm, and, as far as this is not in conflict with our calling, the rules of the government should be obeyed. The government is, in its own position, also in the service of God, and therefore the missionary endeavor has to obey her in all matters that are not in opposition to God's ordination for the church and her evangelism. . . . (2) *With other churches*. The Reformed confession maintains the unity of the body of Christ with regard to the existence of different churches, so that the institutionalized churches have the duty to correspond with the churches abroad which have the same confession of faith. These correspondences should be practiced above all in the missionary endeavor, especially when one works in proximity of one another. (3) *With other mission stations*. In our East Indies, the missionary endeavor is not only done by us, because other churches and denominations are working there also. This situation implies two things: that truth and falseness not be mixed together in the opinion of the Javanese by our fault and that we should not violate the catholicity of Baptism. (4) *With the churches of a good confession of faith in the Indies*. With these churches, no other bond can be made except correspondence or church-federation. For this, special regulations should be set without our churches claiming any kind of supreme authority over such churches.

Regulations for the Missionary Endeavor

How does the Reformed spirituality manifest itself in the management of its missionary endeavor in Java? As the synod of Middelburg pointed to a direction implying that in Java there should be a native, locally instituted church, the Reformed missionary L. Adriaanse managed a process of creating a Javanese church in Purworejo and Temon in Central Java, in February 1900, by ordaining several Javanese-Christians for ministerial positions. The enactment stimulated a controversy in the Netherlands due to the fact that the Javanese church was literally at the point of being independent from her mother church in Europe. To put things in order, therefore, the synod of Arnhem in 1902 formulated the *Zendingsorde* (i.e. regulation for missionary endeavor) and the synod of Utrecht in 1905 explicated the *Leidraad* (i.e. the guidance for the institutionalization of the Javanese church).

In 1902, the synod of Arnhem published a document by the name of the *Zendingsorde* (Mission Regulation) which includes five parts regarding respectively the boundaries of the mission area; ministerial offices; the scope of the missionary work; church discipline; and financial matters. Firstly, regarding mission area, the synod decided that the sending church in the Netherlands, which has to be a locally-instituted church or churches, will have a particular area for its mission. The mission field will be decided upon by the synod after having received enough information related to both the sending church and the scenario of its missionary effort.

Elke Generale Synode wijst op het Zendingsterrein eenige plaatsen aan, met nauwkeurige bepalingen van elks grenzen, welke aan Kerken, die willen uitzenden allereerst worden aanbevolen. Een Kerk, die een aangewezen plaats wil bezetten, geeft daarvan kennis aan de Deputaten der Generale Synode voor de Zending. Bij meer aanvragen om eenzelfde plaats beslissen de Deputaten. Een Kerk, die op het Zendingsterrein een post wil bezetten, die niet door de Generale Synode is aangewezen, vraagt daartoe goedkeuring van de Generale Synode, of, zoo deze in het jaar van aanvraag niet vergadert, van de Deputaten der Generale Synode voor de Zending. (Reenders 2001, 351)

English translation of the quotation

Each General Synod appoints a few particular places in the mission field, with a precise calculation of their borders, which first of all are recommended to churches that want to send out missionaries. A church that is going to work in an assigned mission field should inform her intention to the General-Synod's Deputies of Mission. If there are several commitments to a particular place, the decision lies with the General-Synod's Deputies of Mission. A church that wishes to work in a mission field unregistered by the synod, must ask permission of the General Synod or—if there is no regular synod during the particular year of the application—of the Deputies of Mission.

Secondly, regarding the ministerial offices, the synod stated that principally, to call and nominate a minister of the Word, is the right of a local church and not of a classis (Reenders 2001, 352). However, to examine a candidate is the right of the classis to which the local church belongs, and supervised by at least two of the General Synod's Deputies. Subsequently, the recruitment is put in order by four documents namely: (1) an official letter pronouncing that the candidate is not over 30 years old and medically in a good shape for working in a tropical environment; (2) a copy of the contract in which the cooperation between churches is stipulated, in case several churches want to work together in sending out a missionary; (3) an official letter of calling by the General Synod's Deputies of Mission and an approved instruction; (4) an official contract between the sending church and the sent missionary. Moreover, next to the office of minister of the Word the mission work is supported by two other offices namely the school department (*Schooldienst*) and the medical department (*Medische dienst*). The organizational and financial responsibility for the missionary project, is carried by the sending church, always in cooperation with her fellow churches (Reenders 2001, 353). At this point, it seems that the Reformed spirituality is performed as the visible dynamics of faith experience, wherein the particular-subjective experience of God is grounded on the larger-objective-communal experience of faith in the church. The existence of the minister of the Word and other supportive ministerial officers in the *Schooldienst* and *Medische Dienst* are not only coming from a subjective charisma but also from a collective discernment in the church.

Thirdly, regarding the scope of work, the synod decided that a missionary endeavor is put into action by a local church in many forms. It could be a work of a single local church, of a classis, or of a cooperation between two or more churches within a classis. For doing missionary work, a single-particular-local church can also cooperate with all churches in her classis, if a classis cannot send an ordained missionary provided the Provincial Synod gives its approval. Moreover, in behalf of the mission, a classis can cooperate with other classis with the approval of the Provincial Synod. In all such cases, the advice of the General Synod's Deputies of Mission is always required (Reenders 2001, 354). In the mission field of Java, the spirit of cooperation was to be maintained by the three main missionary-officers who were supposed to have frequent regular meetings. The meetings were to be called the "*algemeene vergaderingen*" (general meetings) that included the ordained missionaries for the service of the Word, as well as educational and medical missionaries; next to that, all three categories were supposed to hold their own meetings, called the "*afzonderlijke vergaderingen*" (particular conferences) (Reenders 2001, 354). Based on the deliberations by

the missionaries who are ordained ministers, official decisions would be made by the General Synod about matters such as which Bible translation should be used, which books for catechism, the kind of preparation for receiving the Holy Communion, liturgical formulas, and the hymnals for the native people (Reenders 2001, 354).

Fourthly, regarding the exercise of church discipline, the synod made a strong resolution that the sending church should maintain pastoral supervision upon the life of all her missionary workers in her territory. This could be done by asking advice from the ordained missionary and eventually from neighboring churches in the Indies. When a European individual, working in any missionary work, commits a grave sin, the minister of the Word should investigate the case and eventually suspend the sinner (Reenders 2001, 356).

Eventually, fifthly, regarding financial matters, the synod determined that financial support for the missionary endeavor should be generated from the church offerings, especially *de Pinkstercollecte* (the Pentecostal collection) and other offerings in the church, next to contributions, donations, as well as legacies. In case of emergency, the General Synod's Deputies of Mission could organize a second collection in order to fulfill the church's commitment to the missionary endeavor. Likewise, if there is an institutionalized church in the Indies that needs financial help, the General Synod—after being well informed by its missionaries—might support that church with a subvention from the general account of the Synod.

At the synod of Utrecht, in 1905, the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands went further as to their missionary endeavor. They determined guidelines for the creation of the Javanese church. The guidelines were written out under the title of *Instituering van Javaansche kerken* (On the establishing of Javanese churches). There are four norms stated in the document regarding capacity, viability, sustainability, and legal-official matters.

Regarding the first norm, the Deputies of mission stated at this Synod that the Christian faith of the Javanese people should be in a mature condition before claiming their right to govern their native church. It would be better to be slow rather than in a hurry. The process of institutionalizing a church is not only a matter of a visible expectation but of guaranteeing a quality of enacting values, and everyone in the institutionalized church, both the office bearers and the members of the community, should have a knowledge about the meaning of ministerial ordinances in the church. Likewise, the institutionalized church should be able to defend its own existence; it should be organizationally independent and able to maintain financial independence. This capacity of maintaining the existence of the church is not a by-passing product of a shortcut process. It is a product of a long process in the past so that its state of readiness cannot be pushed forward from the outside. Before the harvesting time, there has been a long period of sowing, cultivating, and growth. Accordingly, the process of institutionalizing the native church should not be decided from the outside only, because it always needs time to develop an internal capacity of maintaining its existence. This principle is articulated by the synod saying:

Bij dat instellen van de diensten geldt daarom, naar het oordeel uwer deputaten, ook wel: *maak* het niet; laat het allengs *groeien*. . . . En bedenkt men dan bovendien, dat in den apostolischen tijd soms buitengewone krachten en geveel edes Geestes geschenken worden, zodat er deswege soms des te eerder geschikte broeders voor de diensen kwamen, en dit nu niet meer aldus het geval is, dan is het zeker niet onjuist te noemen, als uit het tijdperk der apostolischen kerk, met het oog op het instituering van Javaansche kerken in dezen tijd, de les wordt getrokken: haastigheid niet, voorzichtigheid en omzichtigheid worde betracht. (Reenders 2001, 392-393)

English translation of the quotation:

Regarding the setting up of ministries, according to the opinion of your deputies it should be stated: do not *make it* but let it *grow* gradually. . . . And when one considers the fact, that in the time of the Apostles, sometimes extraordinary strengths and gifts of the Spirit were given, which sometimes provided capable brothers in behalf of the ministries at an early stage, but which is no longer the case nowadays, then it certainly is not improper when, from the era of the Apostles, in behalf of institutionalizing Javanese churches in our time, a lesson can be drawn: do not be in haste, [but] exercise caution and circumspection.

Regarding the second norm, which is about viability, the synod said that the Javanese Christians hitherto were not ready to have a native institutionalized church. This norm was stated due to the fact that in 1900 Adriaanse had already established ministerial offices, *viz.* elders and deacons, among the Javanese Christians in Purworejo and Temon. In this case, the synod argued that for the office of minister of the Word, the ordination should be postponed until there were some Javanese-Christian leaders who were capable of exercising ministerial duties according to the Reformed tradition. The synod says:

Aan uwe deputaten komt echter wel gewenscht voor, dat de missionaire predikant in plaatsen, waar de instelling van de diensten, in overleg met hen die daarvoor zijn aangewezen . . . nog niet raadzaam kan worden geacht, maar waar toch onder de Javaansche Christenen enkelen mochten zijn, die door hunne belijdenis en wandel uitmunten in kennis en genade en vreeze des Heeren, men zulke geloovigen raadplege bij het houden van opzicht over belijdenis en wandel, bij het oefenen van barmhartigheid of ook bij het uitrichten van de sacramenten. [Door aldus te handelen] krijgt men dadelijk nog geene kerkdienaren voor de onderscheidene diensten, die den naam hebben van ouderlingen en diakenen; toch wordt van de hulp van de meest begaafden reeds profijt getrokken: men heeft dan als het ware eene voorloopige insteueering van eene kerk. (Reenders 2001, 393)

Abridged English translation of the quotation:

Your deputies also consider, that in places where up to now it is not advisable to have elders or deacons, Javanese Christians with a good confession of faith, spiritual gifts and a proper way of life can be asked by the missionary reverend to be involved in the exercise of discipline, the work of diaconate and the administration of the sacraments. By doing so, there is an ongoing process toward the provisional institutionalization of a Javanese church.

Regarding the third norm, which is about sustainability, the synod declared that in an institutionalized Javanese church there should be enough native members present in a certain area. This condition was measured by three minimal parametric quantities, namely, that there should be at least twelve male adults with their families; that they should be true native Javanese individuals; and that they should be living within a distance that would not be a hindrance for them in having communion and fellowship. In any case,

(a) . . . toch meenden uwe deputaten, om eenige grens aan te duiden, te moeten stellen dat er minstens twaalf broeders aanwezig moesten zijn, van wie enkelen eenige gaven voor de diensten blijken te hebben ontvangen. (b) voorts worde er op gelet, of die geloovigen behooren tot de eigenlijke desa bevolking dan of ze als vreemdelingen in vroeger of later tijd van elders zijn ingekomen. In het laatste geval ga men niet dan zeer omzichtig tot kerkformatie over. (c) eindelijk mag er wel op gelet worden, of de geloovigen ver van elkander wonen dan wel niet al te verspreid zijn, zoodat zij eenen zekeren bij elkander wonenden kring vormen (Reenders 2001, 394)

English translation of the quotation:

(a) [despite all difficulties of formulating a precise number] your deputies decided to indicate a boundary by stating that there should be at least twelve brothers [male members], some of whom appear to have received some gifts of suitability for the offices; (b) moreover, it should be examined whether those believers belong to the native villagers, or at some time came as foreigners; because if the latter is the

case, then a process of institutionalizing a native church can only be done in a very careful way; (c) finally, it should be considered also whether those members are living relatively close to each other and at least not too far from each other, in order that they can form a circle of neighbors . . .

Finally, regarding the fourth norm, which is about legal-official matters, the synod pronounced five points: namely, (i) that the official name of the Javanese church should be not only Christian but also Reformed Church; (ii) that the native church should not ask permission from the government to become a legal personality, as her existence is coming from Christ; it should be sufficient to inform the government about its ecclesiastical institution; (iii) that the confession of the Javanese Reformed Church is—for the time being—the Three Formula of Unity which later on can be reformulated by the Javanese Christians to pronounce the Christian faith in their own cultural way; (iv) that, accordingly, the church order of the native church is to be the Church Order of Dort; and finally (v) that the liturgy of the Javanese Church preferably has Eastern forms which might help the native Christians to sing, to pray, and to work out their service in a meaningful way. The synod says:

(Ad. a) wat de naam betreft, komt die van ‘de Gereformeerde Kerk te . . .’ hun de beste voor. . . . (Ad. b) De ‘staatsrechtelijke positie’. Uwe deputaten zijn van oordeel, dat eenige kerk, nadat zij geïnstitueerd is, niet om ‘erkenning’ bij de regeering behoeft te gaan aanvragen, opdat zij ‘rechtspersoonlijkheid’ krijgje. Voor zoover hun bekend is, is dit *nooit* geschied. Het zou dan den schijn krijgen, alsof juist in de erkenning van de kerk door de Regeering een zeker onmisbaar bestanddeel van het wezen der kerk gelegen ware, en niet erkenning zou dan eigenlijk beduiden, dat men niet op de rechte wijze als kerk bestond; zoodat b.v. de kerken uit de dagen der vervolging geene rechte kerken zouden zijn geweest. . . . (ad. c) op de vraag: welke ‘confessie’ zullen de geïnstitueerde kerken hebben, menen uwe deputaten te moeten antwoorden . . . zij kunnen nu reeds dadelijk eene meer gedefinieerde belijdenis krijgen in ‘de drie Formulieren van Eenigheid’, en moeten dies ook beginnen met die aan te nemen. . . . (ad. d) Naar welke kerkenorde zullen die geïnstitueerde kerken leven? Uwe deputaten zijn van oordeel: aanvankelijk naar de bekende Dordtsche Kerkenorde. . . . (ad.e.) Wat eindelijk de Liturgie enz. aangaat, . . . zij er in ’t algemeen bijgevoegd dat formulieren, gebed, lied enz. in oosterschen vorm door de Javaansche kerken het best begrepen zullen worden, wijl aansluitend bij hunne oostersche wijze van voorstelling; en dat het daarom tot dien oosterschen vorm voor lied, gebed enz. vroeg of laat ook zal dienen te komen. (Reenders 2001, 394s-396)

English translation of the quotation:

(Ad.a) Regarding the name, the best way is, to call it ‘the Reformed Church of [name of particular place]. . . . (Ad. b) Regarding the legal position. Your ‘*deputaten*’ (representatives) hold the opinion, that any particular church, having been institutionalized, does not need to ask recognition from the government. It might give the impression that she cannot exist in an adequate way without that permission, and, were permission denied, that the church were not allowed to exist; as if the ancient churches in the days of persecution were not adequate churches. . . . (Ad. c) Regarding the confession, your ‘*deputaten*’ answer: . . . they can immediately receive a well-defined confession by accepting the Three Formula of Unity and begin by accepting this confession [...] (Ad. d) Regarding the church order, your ‘*deputaten*’ have the opinion that in the beginning it should be the Church Order of Dort. . . . (Ad. e) Regarding the liturgy etc. . . . we have to add in general, it should be the familiar elements of doctrinal formula, of prayers, and of songs which may be understood best by the Javanese churches, according to their eastern way of understanding. Therefore, sooner or later, this Eastern way to sing, to pray, etc. will have to come into being.

Reformed Spirituality and the Javanese language

In the early phase of Javanese Christianity, there was a problem of communication between the Dutch missionaries and the local Javanese people. The first brought the Christian message according to Biblical and ecclesiastical traditions that had shaped the western civilization; and the latter received the message as a new *ngelmu* (i.e. secret science), believed to be a new hope for cultural enlightenment that might bring a better future for the Javanese people. Hitherto the Dutch missionaries in Central Java believed that the core of Christian message was the one in the official forms of Reformed spirituality, namely the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Articles of Dort on predestination and Church Order. Having been cultural values in the Netherlands, those official forms of Reformed spirituality were not known by the Javanese people who could not even understand the language of the Dutch missionaries.

In order to bridge the gap, in 1886, the missionary Wilhelm tried to translate *de Gereformeerde belijdenis en kerkorde* (the Reformed confession and church order) into the Javanese language (Reenders 2001, 176-177). In his letter, Wilhelm writes:

In de dagen na mijne ziekte nog ongeschikt zijnde voor vermoeienden zedingsarbeid, besloot ik de Catechismus of onderwijzing in de Christelijk leer, die in de Nederlandsche Gereformeerde kerken en scholen geleerd wordt in het Javaansch te vertalen. De Catechismus is reeds vertaald in het Maleisch, maar in eene onverstaanbare taal voor Java, ook al wordt dat Maleisch aangeleerd. De vertaling zal eene getrouwe overzetting zijn in zuiver Javaansch, zonder opsiering met vreemde woorden en uitdrukkingen. Ik hoop zoodra de vertaling gereed zal zijn, ze naar Holland te zenden. Onze God geve, dat het Hoofdbestuur in de gelegenheid zij, er een 1000 exemplaren van te doen drukken, en ze verkrijgbaar te stellen voor 10 cent.

Ik hoop later ook tot de vertaling van de 'Belijdenis des Geloofs der Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland' over te gaan. Hieraan hebben wij behoefte. De geloovige Javaan heeft noodig een in zuiver Javaansch vertaalde Bijbel met Confessie en Catechismus. De Confessie en Catechismus zijn ook nodig ten behoeve van de éénheid in de belijdenis en tot onderwijzing in den weg des Heils. Ik wil onze Christenen de Confessie en de Catechismus aanbieden, opdat zij een leidraad hebben ter voldoening van hunne roeping om de deugden te verkondigen van Hem die hen geroepen heeft uit de duisternis tot zijn verwonderingswaardig licht, en opdat zij hun Bijbel zullen verstaan, en daardoor zich kunnen oefenen in de oprechtheid van hun geloof, en meer en meer bevestigd worden in den weg der verzoening. (Reenders 2001, 176)

English translation of the quotation:

In the days after my illness, being still unfit for weary missionary work, I decided to translate the book of Catechism—or the book of instruction on Christian religion which is taught in the Reformed Church and schools in the Netherlands—into the Javanese language. That Catechism has already been translated into Malay, but that is an incomprehensible language for the Javanese, even though the Malay language is taught. My translation is going to be a faithful translation in pure Javanese language, without embellishment of foreign words and phrases. I hope, as soon as the translation will be ready, to send it to Holland. Hopefully, with the grace of our God, the Board will have an opportunity to print about 1000 copies, and to make it available for 10 cents.

Later on, I hope to proceed to the translation of the 'Confession of Faith of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.' We need this. The Javanese believers are in need of a pure Javanese translation of the Bible with Confession and Catechism. The Confession and Catechism are also necessary for the unity in the confession, and in behalf of instruction about the way of Salvation. I want to offer the Confession and Catechism to our Christians so that they might have a guidance to fulfill their vocation of proclaiming the virtues of Him who has called them out of darkness into his astonishing light; so that they may understand their Bible, and thereby can practice the sincerity of their faith, and be more and more confirmed in the way of reconciliation.

Wilhelm prioritized to translate the Heidelberg Catechism, as the new Javanese converts had no knowledge about the historical background of the Reformation in Europe. What the Javanese needed was some basic knowledge about the Christian faith formulated briefly by the Heidelberg Catechism. Later on, the translated catechism was used by the Javanese assistants of the Dutch missionaries in Java to educate their fellow Christians.

After Wilhelm died, and at the second phase of the Reformed mission in Java, the subsequent Reformed missionary Dirk Bakker tried to develop a more communicative way to educate the Javanese people in the Christian faith. In 1904, he wrote to the editor of the Christian magazine *De Friesche Kerkbode* that there was a linguistic handicap that must be solved in the missionary educational approach, namely the Javanese modes of speaking: in *kromo* or in *ngoko* (Reenders 2001, 377-379). The *kromo* is the Javanese mode of speaking between nobles who place themselves in a hierarchical rank, while the *ngoko* is the Javanese mode of speaking between the common people who place themselves at the same level. According to Bakker, in order to communicate the Christian message clearly, the mode of *ngoko* was imperative as it would face directly the subjective core of the Javanese mind. Bakker says:

Is deze tegenstelling juist, dan spreekt het vanzelf, dat alleen het *Kromo* in aanmerking kan komen voor de prediking. Immers onbeleefd mag men in de prediking *nooit* zijn, zelfs niet, wanneer men bestraffend en vermanend optreedt. Geheel anders wordt het evenwel, wanneer deze tegenstelling onjuist is, gelijk de nieuwere Javanici hebben aangetoond. Dit oordeel der nieuwere taalgeleerden hebt u zelf medegedeeld en komt hierop neer, dat het *Ngoko* de *eigenlijke Javaansche taal* is en *kerngezond* en op zichzelf *volstrekt niet onbeleefd*, terwijl het *Kromo* daarentegen niets is dan een *ziekelyke uitwas op den eigenlijken Javaanschen taalstam*. Hebben de nieuwere onderzoekers gelijk, (en er is geen enkele reden om daaraan te twijfelen) dan is daarmede m.i. het pleit beslecht ten gunste van het *Ngoko*. Door in de prediking *Kromo* te spreken, wordt die prediking ziekelijk (getuige het ontbreken van den gebiedende wijs in het *Kromo*) en bevordert zij een door en door ongezonden toestand van het Javaansche volksleven. Iedereen die den Javaan nog maar even kent, is van oordeel dat één zijner grootste gebreken is—zijn te groote beleefdheid tegenover den meerdere of liever zijn *kruiperigheid*. Wie op de houding van den Javaan let tegenover zijn meerdere zou, als hij niet beter wist, denken dat op Java de slavernij nog bestaat in optima forma. Deze kruiperigheid nu is o.a. ook belichaamd in 't *Kromo*. Ook hier is de taal het volk en weerspiegelt de misvorming van de eigenlijke Javaansche taal door het *Kromo* zoo ook juist de misvorming van het Javaansche volkskarakter, die hem zedelijk en oeconomisch te gronde richt. Het *Kromo* is de uiting van een slaafschen geest, die moet uitgedreven worden, zal de Javaan ooit tot een vrij en krachtig volk worden. (Reenders 2001, 378)

English translation of the quotation:

If this contradiction is true, only the mode of *Kromo* [i.e. the polite way of Javanese speaking] can be used for preaching. Even if a preacher wants to speak in admonition or punishment, he should never be rude and use the mode of *Kromo*. However, the new Javanese linguists see a different direction. In this new approach, the *Ngoko* [which absolutely is not a rude way of Javanese speaking] is seen as the actual and healthy kernel/core of the Javanese language, while the *Kromo* on the other hand is an unhealthy excrescence of the original Javanese linguistical roots. Therefore, if the new researchers are correct (and there is no reason to doubt them), these newer researchers prefer to advocate the usage of *Ngoko*. In this sense, by using the mode of *Kromo* in preaching, it seems to be promoting an unhealthy state of living for the Javanese. Anyone who has knowledge about Javanese people would recognize that the burden of courtesy is too large, nearing servility. Being daily confronted with this extreme form of courtesy one would even be inclined to think that slavery still exists in Java. The deformation of the Javanese language is somehow creating deformation in the Javanese nation's character, leading to both moral and economic corruption. The *Kromo* is the expression of a slave spirit, which should be expelled, in order for the Javanese to become a free and powerful nation.

Bakker states that, by the mode of *Kromo*, the Javanese way of speaking embodies a mentality of slavery. Therefore, in the congregation, the Javanese Christians should share

their faith in the mode of *Ngoko*. They should communicate Christian faith in an egalitarian way, as to speak in *Kromo* was understood as to ensue mental slavery.

What Bakker's did not see, however, was the Javanese affective-mind as to the *rasa* (i.e. spirit of awareness). The Javanese people see the world as a kind of *advaita*, namely the inter-penetration of antithetical worlds. These inter-penetrative forces must be put in order by literal as well as non-literal approaches. The literal approach is called *tata* (i.e. order) and the non-literal approach is called *rasa* (i.e. prudence, watchful mind, affective consideration). To put those inter-penetrative forces in order, the Javanese language uses the modes of *kromo* and of *ngoko*. The first represents dignity symbolized as a clothed body, while the later represents purity symbolized as a naked self. Both are *advaita* (non-duality) as they are one hypostatic reality so to speak.

Bakker's misunderstanding about Javanese spirituality was also reflected by his opinion about the *wayang*, namely the Javanese puppet show that uses *kromo* and *ngoko* in a very dynamic way of storytelling. In 1923, he argued that the *wayang* embodies un-Christian values, foreign to Biblical faith, as it was proved by the Javanese Christians' aversion to the traditional puppet show. Bakker argued that the aversion should be solved carefully, as it might be harmful to the future Javanese church, saying:

Om haar zedelijk godsdienstig karakter kan de wajang door de Christenen niet overgenomen worden. Ook behoeft ze niet in bescherming genomen te worden om haar hooge kunstwaarde. . . . Ik acht 't een gunstig verschijnsel, dat er bij de Christen-Javanen een sterke reactie is tegen het overbrengen van de wajang op Christelijk erf. Het is een bewijs, dat er een afkeer is van het Javaansche bijgeloof. Het is de roeping van de Zending dien afkeer te versterken. Verflauwing van de grenzen tusschen Christendom en Heidendom in dit opzicht, zou de schadelijkste gevolgen kunnen hebben voor de gemeente der toekomst. (Reenders 2001, 678-679)

English translation of the quotation:

Concerning its moral-religious character, the *wayang* [i.e. the Javanese puppet show] cannot be taken over by the Christians. Also, it does not need to be protected, regarding its high artistic values. . . . I consider it as a favorable phenomenon that there was a strong reaction from the Javanese Christians against the existence of the *wayang* on Christian ground; and this is a strong indication that there is an aversion to Javanese superstition. The Mission is called to strengthen that aversion. In this sense, slackening the line between Christianity and the pagan world might have a harmful impact for the future congregation.

In his consideration, however, Bakker missed the point regarding the usage of *kromo* and *ngoko* in the *wayang*. The two modes of Javanese way of speaking are not expressing slavery but a cosmic awareness about the multi-dimensional reality of human life. Sometimes, it is hierarchical but that is absolutely not always the case. The Javanese Christians' aversion to the *wayang* should be interpreted carefully, as it might reveal a kind of alienation: namely, that the Javanese Christians were gradually alienated from their native cultural world. They could not see the world with the eyes of their ancestors, as they started thinking with a western mindset. In this case, the rejection of the most popular Javanese art performance should be considered as an indication of a co-opted mind. It is a proof of an effective colonialism.

However, we should look deeper into the phenomenon. Bakker was facing a newly converted Christian congregation which had just left its old cultural worldview and tried to develop a new one. The issue was to make a careful discretion to evaluate which was valuable and

invaluable cultural heritage. Bakker realized that the Javanese people had a valuable cultural heritage but they must face historical forces which were wrapped in sin and slavery. In this context, he had to articulate the Christian Gospel as a message of liberation from slavery as well as superstition. To endorse emancipation, he promoted the *ngoko* mode of speaking in the Javanese Christian service; and to reject superstition he argued about the danger of the *wayang* for the Javanese new Christian converts. Therefore, despite his negative argument about the *wayang*, Bakker expressed his cultural vision about the future Javanese Christians playing the popular native art performance. He says:

Waar het hier over gaat is de wajang in zijn echt Javaansch karakter. Zeer terecht wendt de Javaansche Christenen zich daarvan af. Hij moet daarmee iets prijs geven wat hem lief is. Doch het Christelijk leven is een leven van zelfverloochening. En hij krijgt er iets anders voor in de plaats: de geschiedenis van het werk Gods tot verlossing van zondaren, een geschiedenis, die oneindig ver staat boven de wajangverhalen, die totaal buiten de werkelijkheid staan. Het is ontegenzeggelijk waar, dat de Javaan zeer gehecht is aan de wajang. Er is niets wat hem zoozeer boeit. Gansche nachten kan hij luisteren naar den dalang. De wajang trekt het volk. Het zou voor de Zending een zaak van belang zijn, indien ze iets kon doen, waardoor zij eveneens het volk in breede scharen kon trekken, om het daardoor te brengen onder de invloed van het Evangelie. De echt-Javaansche wajang kan daar echter niet voor worden gebruikt. Het eenige wat de Zending doen kan, om het gemis van de Javaansche wajang te vergoeden, is de Bijbelsche Geschiedenis vertellen, toegelicht met lantaarnplaten, een Christelijke wajang in optima forma. En verder moet ze aan de toekomst overlaten of er een Christelijke wajang zal ontstaan, die niet verlicht wordt door Westersche lantaarnplaatjes, maar waarin de echt Javaansche kunstzin tot uiting komt. Rechtstreeks kan ze daarop geen invloed uitoefenen. Het is haar roeping den Christen-Javaan te waarschuwen tegen de zonde van afgoderij en bijgeloof en hem steeds dieper te doen inleven in de waarheid, die naar de godzaligheid is. (Reenders 2001, 679-680)

English translation of the quotation:

The real issue is here the *wayang* in its true Javanese sense. Justifiably the Javanese Christians turn away from that. In order to live Christian values, they must relinquish something dear to them and perform self denial. They pursue something else, which is the history of God's salvation of the liberation of sinners; and this divine history is absolutely above the *wayang* stories, which are outside reality. It is true, that the Javanese are very attached to the *wayang*, as they can be listening carefully to the dalang [i.e. the one who plays the puppet show] during the whole night. In this context, the Mission should compensate what is lost among the Javanese Christians. They should have their *wayang* back, but with the influence of the Gospel which is now unavailable from the ordinary *wayang*. In the future, there should be a Christian *wayang* played by a Christian *dalang* who plays the puppet show, not influenced by western pictures, but in which the real Javanese art is displayed. It is the calling of the Christian Javanese to warn the people about the danger of idolatry, sin, and superstition. By so doing, there would be great empathy to the truth and godliness.

In the above train of thought, it is revealed that the Reformed missionary was thinking from the western perspective. He might have understood that the Javanese Christians should not leave their cultural heritage behind, but he did not realize the danger of alienation. If the Javanese Christians were alienated from the core of their traditional belief, they would be alienated as well from the Javanese cultural language. They would not be able to speak communicatively with their native fellows, so that the future Javanese church would exist as a colonial monument among the colonialized people.

Reformed Spirituality and the Struggle for a Javanese Hymnal

The first synod of the GKJ, in 1931, recognized the existence of two Javanese hymnals among their congregations. The first one had been used by the Javanese Christians before 1928. It was used by the Javanese Christians from different denominations: the one of the

NZG mission, of the DZV mission, and of the Gereformeerd mission; and the title of this hymnal was *Kidoengipoen Pasamoean² Kristen lan Lija-lijane* (De Jong 1997, 15). At the present time, this book is recognized within the GKJ as the classical hymnal of the Javanese Christians. It is used by the three Javanese-speaking denominations, namely the GKJ, the GKJW, and the GITJ; the first one is the Reformed (*Gereformeerde*) church in Central-Java; the second is the Reformed (*Hervormde*) church in East-Java; and the third one is the Mennonite denomination. The first synod of the GKJ, however, also recognized the second hymnal coming from the Reformed missionary K. van Dijk. The missionary published his 150 Javanese psalms. Some Javanese Reformed congregations did use this hymnal, while others did not as they felt more comfortable with the classical and interdenominational hymnal of the Javanese Christians.

As the question of identity was the main issue of the first synod of the GKJ in 1931, the effort to have a true Reformed Javanese hymnal became a point of discussion there. Regarding the Van Dijkhymnal, the synod recognized its Reformed character but struggled with its poor quality of the Javanese language. In this case, they appointed a committee to make some revisions to the hymnal. This committee struggled for several years before finally facing the fact that the Van Dijk hymnal was beyond their authority. In order to end the painful debate, in 1938, Van Dijk withdrew the permission which he earlier gave to the committee. He claimed the authorship of the hymnal so that the GKJ had to create a new official hymnal by itself. The hymnal committee continued its effort from scratch before J. Darmohatmodjo proposed a set of Javanese hymnals in 1956. The proposal was rejected, unfortunately, as the popular usage of the classical Javanese hymnals became the issue. This case was noted by De Jong who says:

Voor de liturgie der Javaanse Kerken besloot de synode van 1931 gebruik te maken van het in 1928 verschenen Liederenboek met 171 Javaanse liederen, getiteld *Kidoengipoen Pasamoean² Kristen lan Lija-lijane*. Hierin waren 48 psalmen opgenomen, aangevuld met 123 gezangen gemaakt op bijbelteksten en andere geestelijke liederen, alsmede een aantal liturgische formulieren. Deze bundel, die zowel in Javaanse als Latijnse lettersoort verscheen, was ontstaan als vrucht van samenwerking van verschillende zendingsorganisaties, die op Java werkzaam waren. De eerste synodes spraken uit dat de Javaanse Kerken over alle 150 psalmen in Javaanse vertaling dienden te beschikken. De Javaanse psalmbereijming die Van Dijk had vervaardigd, getiteld *Masmoer satoes seket lan Masmoer pamoedji sawatawis* (1926, 1938), werd wegens een meningsverschil tussen hem en zijn Nederlandse collega's in Midden-Java niet ingevoerd. De Javaanse synode van 1932 evenwel voerde hem toch wel in, al werd tegelijkertijd een commissie benoemd die de vertaling moest controleren en waar nodig herzien. Deze commissie, die na enige tijd onder leiding kwam te staan van J. Darmohatmodjo, predikant te Yogyakarta, presenteerde in 1956 het resultaat van haar arbeid. (De Jong 1997, 15)

English translation of the quotation:

In behalf of the Liturgy of Javanese churches, the 1931 synod decided to use the hymnal with 171 Javanese hymns, published in 1928 with the title of *Kidoengipoen Pasamoean² Kristen lan Lija-lijane* [Hymnal of the Christian Churches and Others]. In this book, there are 48 psalms and 123 hymns based on texts from the Bible and other spiritual songs, as well as a number of liturgical formulas. This volume, which appeared both in Javanese and Latin characters, has emerged as the fruit of collaboration between several mission organizations working in Java. The first synod meetings decided that the [Reformed] Javanese churches would be able to have their own 150 psalms in Javanese translation. This metrical psalm translation had been made by Van Dijk with the title *Masmoer satoes seket lan Masmoer pamoedji sawatawis* [150 Psalms and other hymns to be used for worship] (published in 1926 and 1938). This book however has triggered an ongoing contention due to disagreement between Van Dijk and his Dutch colleagues in Central Java. The synod of 1932 introduced his hymnal but at the same time appointed a committee to make some revision to his Javanese translation. The committee was chaired by J. Darmohatmodjo, a pastor in Yogyakarta who presented the result of its work in 1956.

The above story has its roots already in the nineteenth century, when the Dutch missionaries working among the Javanese people tried to create hymnals for their native congregations. In 1902, a collection of songs created by Reformed missionary Philippus Bieger (1841-1911) was published. Translated from Dutch, this collection includes songs written in Latin and Javanese scripts. Regarding this collection, De Jong says:

Verder had men de beschikking over een liederenbundel van Bieger, die deze in 1902 had uitgegeven, waarin naast Nederlandse en Malaise liederen in Latijns schrift ook liederen waren opgenomen die in Javaans schrift waren gesteld. (De Jong 1997, 16)

English translation of the quotation:

Furthermore, they had access to a collection of hymns from Bieger, published in 1902, which included spiritual hymns in Malay and Javanese languages, both in Latin and Javanese alphabets, in addition to the Dutch hymns.

That publication implies that, although Bieger was in opposition to Sadrach in the 1880's, he had tried to be able to communicate with the native Javanese people. His effort reflects a spirit of Reformed tradition. While his colleague J. Wilhelm tried to communicate the Christian message by becoming an ally to Sadrach in order to pave a way for the creation of a native church, Bieger served the Gospel from a different approach. He tried to communicate the Christian message as it has grown in the Reformation of the western church. He tried to serve the orthodoxy of the Christian message communicated to the Javanese people. Bieger's point of weakness, however, was his inability to understand the Javanese way of thinking as he was unable to master the Javanese language as Wilhelm did. He did not maintain a deep engagement to the native people so that his position became one of a person belonging to the colonizers.

At the early phase of the GKJ, the Dutch missionaries realized the importance of the native agents of the new Javanese Reformed church. Therefore, the debate on Van Dijk's hymnal became very intense as the new GKJ struggled for its national identity as well as its authentic Christianity. The hymnal of the GKJ was idealized as the one that would come from the womb of the Javanese Christians confessing their faith in Java. The hymnal should not come as a translation of the Dutch Christianity. It had to be a hymnal of Javanese Christians who actualized their own confession in their way of singing Javanese spiritual songs.

Conclusion of the Chapter

In Chapter Three we have seen the struggle for a pious commitment to the Reformed faith in the field of evangelism on Java. Some Dutch missionaries believed that the Reformed faith was served by maintaining orthodoxy according to the historical standards of western Christianity. Others, however, believed that the Reformed faith was served by looking at the dawn of the new world, serving the divine salvation to the native people from their own world. In this context, the mission field of Java became very problematic, as the natives were poorly educated and economically weak. Therefore, the struggle for a pure Reformed faith in Java should be integrated into the project of civilization. The mission field of Java should become a place for education and social justice. This was realized by the second generation of the Reformed missionaries, who worked on Java not only to create new Christian converts but also to create a foundation for a new Reformed and educated native society.

Chapter 4

Reformed Spirituality in Modern Reformed Javanese Christianity, the GKJ

The idea of the GKJ's Reformed spirituality, which has been developed since the nineteenth-century evangelism among the Javanese people in Central Java, could be approached by describing how the GKJ struggled for having its own, original confession of faith rooted in the Indonesian soil. This struggle eventually led to a process of creating a new catechism called PPAG, *Pokok-pokok Ajaran Gereja* (i.e., the Church's main dogmatical teaching) meaning the most important theological principles being used by the GKJ to communicate the substance of Christian faith in the Indonesian society. The process of creating the PPAG has become a story about the Gospel revealed during the historical journey of Javanese people, especially in Central Java, who have experienced the missionary endeavor of Dutch Reformed Christianity.

This is a story about Reformed Christians practicing thankfulness and responsibility for their faith by planting an indigenous church, nurturing this young church, maintaining the growing church, and developing the existence of a mature church in the public square of Indonesian society. For this reason, in this chapter we will elaborate three points of discussion, viz. the struggle of creating a mature-independent Javanese church which is then to be the GKJ; the struggle of the GKJ to have an authentic confession of faith in the midst of many social-political changes in Indonesia; and finally the coming into being of the PPAG, which contains the major dogmatic points recognized by the GKJ to be its confession of faith.

The Creation of the GKJ: How Can Reformed Spirituality Be Traced in the History of GKJ?

The early phase of the GKJ: 1900-1931: The institutionalization of the GKJ

While Sadrach can be named the prehistoric figure of the GKJ, Adriaanse became the first historical figure of the institutionalization of the Reformed Javanese church. As we mentioned in the previous chapter, Adriaanse was born in Vlissingen, the Netherlands, in 1856 (Reenders 2001, 856) and was sent to Java in 1894. He started his missionary years with a study of the Javanese language, from 1895 to 1897. In the same years, 1896-1898, he made contact with Sadrach, who had become a serious problem for the Reformed mission at that time; and in 1899, Adriaanse published *Sadrach's Kring* as well as a hymnal consisting of several Javanese psalms and *tembang* (i.e. Javanese poetry and spiritual hymns).

Having failed to reconcile Sadrach and the Reformed mission, in 1900, Adriaanse decided to establish the Javanese church based on the Middelburg principles regarding the importance of a local church. He ordained some Javanese to be the church leaders for the church of Purworejo and the church of Temon. According to the Middelburg principle, the evangelization should always be the endeavor of a local church; so that for the evangelization of Java it was imperative to create local Javanese churches being able to communicate the Gospel to their native fellows. However, as there was no platform for the process of institutionalization of the Javanese church, Adriaanse's initiative prompted objections from the GKN in the Netherlands. Before the Synod of Utrecht in 1905, there was no common

ground in the GKN to discuss things that had to be done on behalf of the creation of the Javanese church.

At the Synod of Utrecht of 1905, however, there was that common ground. What Adriaanse had done in 1900, as to the church of Purworejo and of Temon, might be continued with a major principle that the Javanese Christians should have their own possibilities to maintain their church both administrative-financially and theologically. The Javanese Christians should be prepared to have their own Christian religious responsibility and to sustain their financial resources. As there was only a small number of educated Javanese Christians, the effort to create a training program for their church leaders was imperative.

In order to handle this necessity, a Reformed mission pastor was sent to develop a grassroot program for native Christians. As we saw in chapter 3, Ds Dirk Bakker (1865-1932) who had formerly worked in Kebumen since 1900, was transferred to Yogyakarta in 1906, in order to create the second department of the Keuchenius School in the city. The department was designed to provide a theological training, in Javanese language, within a three years course. As it was directed by Ds Dirk Bakker, the program was recognized as the “*cursus*-Bakker.” Starting in 1906, this series of courses was finally closed in 1921, when it was developed further into a theological course in Dutch with a higher academic requirement. The “*cursus*-Bakker” however was successful and able to provide a generation of church leaders for the GKJ in its primary stage of ecclesial life. As the graduates of the “*cursus*-Bakker” increased the number of skilful members of the native Christian church, the process of institutionalization of the Javanese church could continue from 1911 on. As a result, several Javanese local churches have been established before the first synod of the GKJ in 1931. The list of these churches is as follows:

	Local Churches	Residences to become classes uniting the local churches	Years of institutionalization
1.	Purworejo	Purworejo	1900
2.	Temon	Purworejo	1900
3.	Glonggong	Kebumen	1911
4.	Yogyakarta	Yogyakarta	1913
5.	Purbolinggo	Banyumas	1915
6.	Solo – Margoyudan	Surakarta	1916
7.	Grendeng	Banyumas	1919
8.	Adirejo	Banyumas	1920
9.	Kesingi	Purworejo	1920
10.	Palihan	Purworejo	1924
11.	Kebumen	Kebumen	1924
12.	Grujugan	Kebumen	1924
13.	Magelang	Magelang	1924
14.	Klaten	Surakarta	1924
15.	Tungkak	Yogyakarta	1925
16.	Patalan	Yogyakarta	1925
17.	Candisewu	Yogyakarta	1925
18.	Tlepok	Purworejo	1926

19.	Wates	Yogyakarta	1927
20.	Sragen	Surakarta	1927
21.	Pamrian	Kebumen	1928
22.	Purwokerto	Banyumas	1929
23.	Cilacap	Banyumas	1929
24.	Jono	Kebumen	1929
25.	Solo – Manahan	Surakarta	1929
26.	Solo - Danukusuman	Surakarta	1929
27.	Gemantar	Surakarta	1930
28.	Wonogiri	Surakarta	1930

Source: Data from Reenders 2001, 888-889.

On March 12, 1930, the Reformed missionary pastors L. Netelenbos and K. van Dijk reported that the Javanese local churches were ready to have their first synod (Reenders 2001, 816-822). Their church offices were entirely complete according to the *Gereformeerde* principle, including the elders, deacons, and pastors. They were ready to establish a synod representing an order of communion (*kerkverband*) among established local churches, to deal with ecclesial matters such as a confession (*belijdenis*), liturgical formulas for administering the sacraments, Christian marriage, church order, and pastoral matters. These subjects became the main points of discussion during the first synod of the GKJ on February 17, 1931, in Kebumen.

In its second phase (1931-1942) the GKJ was confronted with a new phenomenon. When the first synod of GKJ was held, Indonesian nationalism was blooming. The native people saw their identity in relation to the culture and land of Indonesia as it had been revealed at the October 28 1928 youth congress, articulating the *Sumpah Pemuda* (oath of the youth). It was a political confession to be one country, one nation, and to have one national language of Indonesia. At that time, the native people saw their identity to be not a kind of property of the Dutch, but a kind of human dignity equal to any kind of human beings. In that same time, as a fruit of the public education, which had been cultivated since the end of the nineteenth century, Indonesia started producing native leaders calling for the end of Dutch colonialism and the dawn of Indonesian independence. In that context, the synod of GKJ was held using the native language of the Javanese, and was led by Javanese church leaders, whereas the Dutch missionaries attended only to be consultants. Regarding the influence of *Sumpah Pemuda*, it may be said that the synod was facing the problem of national identity, when it was confronted with such questions as: who are you, are you originally Indonesia, are you really existing in Indonesia?

Hence, to answer such problems, the synod had to articulate its own confession of faith, and this confession should receive an original value coming from the deep historical experience of the Javanese Christianity, and not be a copy of the Dutch Christians. That principle is characteristically *Gereformeerde* regarding the originality of a confession of faith. We can see this kind of principle at least in the two significant synods, namely, the 1896 Synod of Middelburg and the 1905 Synod of Utrecht. As said earlier, as to the Javanese evangelization, the Middelburg Synod said important things about the existence of the local church (Reenders 2001, 236-249). Likewise, for the institutionalization of the Javanese local churches, the Utrecht Synod said important things about the “Guidelines on the establishment of the Javanese church” (Reenders 2001, 391-396).

In 1931, the characteristically Reformed value regarding the principle of originality for a faith confession had been internalized by the participants of the synod of GKJ.²² Without pointing to the three unifying confessions of the Reformed tradition, which are characteristically western in nature, the 1931 Synod confessed that the GKJ believes that the two testaments of the Bible are the Word of God. Likewise, the synod stated that the GKJ believes that the Heidelberg Catechism is a good explanation of the Bible but, as it has come from the European context, it should be placed as a temporary confession of the GKJ; in the future, the GKJ should produce its own confession which is rooted historically in the depth of Javanese Christianity. These two points are still relevant, as the first one has been working in the GKJ today; the denomination uses the Protestant canon of the Bible; likewise, the subsequent synods of GKJ from 1930s to 1990s have always struggled for an original confession of faith of the GKJ.

The issue of nationalism is not directly reflected in the textual record of the 1931 synod regarding the Indonesian social-political situation of the time. A paper from Ds H.A. Van AnDEL may help to explain its theological background. When he went to the International Missionary Conference, held in Jerusalem, 1928, Van AnDEL presented a paper regarding the issue of nationalism. In it he said that the church should not be a national church designated to an exclusive human race. Instead, since the body of Christ is always universal in character, the church should be inclusively a supra-national entity (De Jong 1997, 82-86). In some degrees, that kind of thought was in the back of the mind of the participants of the 1931 synod. Although they were aware of their existence as the Javanese church, the Javanese representatives of the synod did not understand the GKJ to be exclusively a church for the Javanese race only. They conceived the GKJ as a local church for the people of Java, that is, the natives of—or people born on—the soil of the island of Java. In this sense, the idea of nationality was understood to be not only an ethnic identity but also a sociological network of the GKJ. The identity of GKJ is always related to the social-political situation of Java, as it was reflected in their struggle for a church order and hymnal.

Regarding the church order, the 1931 synod recorded an important discussion among the representatives of the Javanese Christians:

²²The Javanese ministers participating in the 1931 Synod had been theologically trained in the “*cursus-Bakker*” using the Javanese language (1906-1923), before the course developed into a higher theological education using the Dutch language (1925). In the theological courses, reasonably, the teaching of the 1905 Synod of Utrecht was discussed. The synod stated that the process of institutionalizing the Javanese church should be done by educating the natives so that the Javanese Christians, standing on their Christian faith, would be able to exist authentically in the national public realm. Therefore, the synod said, it is imperative to bring the heritage of the Reformed tradition to them, so that the Javanese Christians might recognize their quality as Reformed Christians. For this reason, the Javanese Christians should have knowledge about the three unifying confessions of the Reformed tradition, namely: the Belgic Confession stating the Reformed biblical canon, the Heidelberg Catechism formulating the Reformed biblical doctrines, and the Doctrines of Dort establishing the Reformed church order. The 1905 Utrecht Synod had already emphasized the importance of providing Javanese translations of those three unifying confessions.

On the mission field at that time, the Reformed missionaries decided to give their own priority to the direction of the Utrecht Synod. Firstly, they focus on the use of the Javanese Bible which was already available in Central Java; and by doing so they brought the Protestant canon in the form of an authoritative Bible and not of a Belgic confession. Secondly, they did not translate the church order of Dort prematurely, as the Javanese church was in the process of institutionalization. Eventually, therefore, the missionaries focused their energy to use the Heidelberg Confession for their catechetical work among the Javanese Christians.

Wontenipun Pranata oetawi Kerken-Orde poenika djalaran wontenipoen prekawis-prekawis ingkang kedah dipoen tata, mila sampoen ngantos damel pranatan roemijin. Prajogi nitipriksa prekawis kalih ingkang sampoen wonten oetawi toemindak ing salebeting Pasamoewan. Sasampoenipoen mekaten ladjeng wiwit damel Pranatan kangga nata prekawis kalih waoe, saja mindak katahing prekawis lan saja ewah kawontenaning Pasamoewan, Pranatan inggih dados saja wewah lan owah-owah, dados boten namoeng adjeg kemawon. Patrap mekaten, Pranatan ladjeng tjotjog kalijan ingkang dipoen tata, temah saged maedahi dateng Pasamoewan. Djer Pranatan punika dede pamisesa ingkang meksa, nanging satoenggaling patrap saking pamilihipoen Pasamoewan pijambak ingkang dipoen anggep tjondong kalijan kersanipun Goesti Allah kangge nata kawontenanipoen pijambak. (Sinode GKJ 1931, 5)

English translation of the quotation:

The church order exists because there are problems to be put in order. We should not, therefore, create a church order at the outset as we do not have any knowledge about problems in the church. We should create a church order to regulate real problems in the church facing challenges in the historical changes. By doing so, we will have a significant church order that may be helpful for the church, as the nature of church order is not a tyrannical alien from the external world but a helpful instrument for the church in its ministry to the will of God.

The struggle for a church order was concluded in the 1932 Synod of GKJ, when the Javanese church confirmed their church order (Sinode GKJ 1932, 4ff; De Jong 1997, 92-101). The church order was adapted from the Synod of Dort without mentioning anything about the Remonstrant context and the Calvinistic emphasis on the glory of God behind the order of natural and historical phenomena. The church order was simply a set of regulations as to the existence and communion of the Javanese local churches, based on the biblical teaching of the Heidelberg Catechism. As it had no theological discussion about the idea of absolute predestination against the matter of the Remonstrants' teaching of human liberty, the church order was really a Reformed church order being contextualized for the native Christians in their "nationality" of being Javanese people. The 1932 church order was designed not to be a "Dort order for the Javanese Christians" but a Christian church order for the Javanese people. Its main reference was the universal biblical teaching for all Christians and not particularly the teaching of Dort for the Dutch people. Although several Dutch missionaries were involved in the drafting process of the church order, the native awareness of "nationality" played an important role in the decisive moment of the synod.

The awareness of "nationality" was actually reflected in a perpetual debate, in the GKJ synods since 1931, regarding the issue of hymnals. Although there was a Reformed hymnal that had been used by Dutch Christians in Java, the Javanese Christians were struggling to have their own hymnal.²³ There were two cases that had been difficult to solve here.

Firstly, the GKJ yearned to have the right to edit the classical Javanese hymnal produced by the Mennonite missionaries (such as Pieter Jansz and his son Pieter Antonie Jansz) in

²³The Reformed tradition in the Netherlands has made use of the Psalms of Geneva in the belief that the church should use exclusively the Word of God not only for prayer and preaching but also for singing. In the context of Java, there was a totally different cultural environment. The Javanese Christians did not have any knowledge about the war between religions during the Reformation, so that they hardly recognized the difference between true spiritual songs and false ones, measured by the canonical text of the Bible. In the Javanese culture, there was a major tradition about singing the *tembang* comprising spiritual principles with universal moral values such as loving one's neighbour and living out the justice, peace, and integrity of creation. The *Gereformeerd* missionaries in Java were aware of the local tradition and they tried to cultivate it carefully. For example, L. Adriaanse in 1897 and Bieger in 1902 tried to collect and to improve the Christian *tembang* to be used as devotional instruments in the Javanese congregations (Reenders 2001, 856, 16); and this effort was accompanied by the endeavor of C. Poensen, a missionary of the NZG, who also tried to collect and to improve some Javanese *tembang* to be used in the Javanese congregations in East Java (Poensen 1900).

cooperation with the Javanese communities from the NZG mission in East Java, the mission of the Salatiga Zending in the Northern part of Central Java, and the Reformed mission in the Southern part of Central Java. In behalf of the Javanese churches in the *Gereformeerd* mission area, the hymnal was published in 1928 under the title *Kidoengipoen Pasamuwan-pasamuwan Kristen lan Liya-liyane* (De Jong 1997, 15).²⁴ Nevertheless, the copyright was preserved by the fellowship of the inter-denominational churches using the Javanese language, so that it was impossible for the GKJ to claim the exclusive right to edit this hymnal according to the Reformed theological standard and the GKJ's sense of aristocratic poetry.

Secondly, as a Reformed church, the GKJ believed that there should be a biblical hymnal representing the 150 Psalms in the Sacred Scriptures. As said earlier, for this purpose, in 1926, a Reformed missionary in Java by the name of Klaas van Dijk had published his work under the title *Masmoer satoes seket lan Mazmoer pamoedji sawatawis* which the first GKJ synod considered usable to become the official hymnal. This hope eventually vanished as there were many obstacles in the Javanese language of this hymnal, which could not be revised without destroying Van Dijk's original work. Since he refused to give his exclusive copyright to the GKJ, the 1938 synod decided that the work would remain his intellectual property; however, it could not be accepted as the official hymnal of the GKJ (Sinode GKJ 1938, art. 19).

Those two cases reflect a sense of "nationality" in the GKJ. The first case indicates a sense of connection or solidarity with the other Javanese congregations. This sense of connection was stronger than a paternal relationship to their Reformed missionaries. Even though this Dutch missionary had provided them with a biblical hymnal according to the Reformed theology, the sense of connection with the classical hymnal was ensued for a long time. Although the classical hymnal has many theological and grammatical problems, it has proved to be a source of spiritual identity anchored in the native culture for the Javanese Christians.

In the shadow of the Dutch administration, however, the nationalism of the GKJ had nothing to do with a critical evaluation of the colonial regime. The GKJ did not see the Dutch government to be the enemy of the Indonesian nationalism. Rather, the Javanese church saw it to be the divine agent to create mutual order for the Indonesian society. Therefore, when the Japanese military forces were pushing forward to the edge of Indonesia, the 1942 synod of the GKJ sent a telegram to the Governor General of the Netherlands Indies, expressing its moral support to the Dutch government in the country. Writing in Dutch, the Javanese ministers in the synod wrote:

De Javanese kerken van Zd. Midden Java, verenigde Synode, vergaderd te Poerwardja, aan 5e-7e dezerbiden Uwe Excellentie eerbiedig, dat God als Heere, Uwe Excellentie de buitengewone kracht en wijsheid om zo spoedig mogelijk de overwinning te delen. (Sinode GKJ 1942).

English translation of the quotation:

The Javanese churches of Southern Central Java, uniting Synod, assembled in Poerwardja, on 5-7 of this month, pray respectfully in behalf of Your Excellency that God as Lord may grant extraordinary power and wisdom to obtain a victory as soon as possible.

²⁴ The title means "The Hymnal of the Javanese Churches and Others". Among the Javanese Christians, the hymnal was commonly known as the *KPK*. It was widely used in the Javanese congregations, not only at Java, but also at Sumatra.

This moral support, however, evaporated into darkness when the Dutch missionaries of the GKJ had to enter the Japanese prisoner camps. Many Reformed missionaries, who had been working for a long time in Java, had to face their death in the Japanese prison camps (De Jong 1997, 771-791). Several names can be mentioned here such as B.J. Esser, who had been working for the Javanese church in Purbolinggo, and died after several arrests in the prison camp. The above mentioned K. van Dijk, who had been working for a long time in the Javanese church of Kebumen and of Wonosobo, died in the prisoncamp of Ambarawa. A.F. Keuchenius, who had been working for the Javanese church in Purworejo, died in a prison camp in Semarang. H.A. van Andel, also mentioned above, who had been working for the development of the Javanese church in Solo, also died in a prisoncamp in Semarang. Ironically, there is no official statement in the records of the GKJ synods expressing their memory to be a blessing for the Javanese Christianity. This incongruous matter reflects the dramatic impact of the Japanese era as to the idea of nationalism among the majority of the Indonesian people.

The Japanese militarism had changed the nationalism of the country into radicalism with an anti-Dutch sentiment. As their fellow countrymen did in the period of Japanese occupation, the leaders of the GKJ changed their political views toward the Dutch people radically. They saw the Dutch people, even though they were missionaries and spiritual leaders, as the foreign oppressors being responsible for any problem and difficulty of the current Indonesia. In this time, there was an ambiguity among the church leaders of the GKJ. On the one hand, the Javanese church saw itself as an independent entity, radically separated from the Dutch colonialism. On the other hand, the new native church was fundamentally weak and financially dependent upon her "mother/sister church" in the Netherlands. This ambiguity lasted for several decades till the GKJ was finally able to achieve its mature independence in a new Indonesian society.

After the Indonesian Independence

In its third phase (1945-1949), after the Indonesian Independence, the GKJ had to position itself as to the Indonesian Revolution. The new Republic of Indonesia was proclaimed on August 17, 1945. The Japanese army had surrendered to the Allies and started losing its control over the Indonesian militias which had been formed in order to confront the European forces and over the Indonesian politicians who had been prepared to lead a new state under the Japanese commonwealth. When the Japanese army was defeated, there was a vacuum of power in Indonesia which stimulated unity among the native politicians and militias to take over the power for the independence of Indonesia. Among the GKJ's church leaders from this period we have to mention Ds Basuki Probowinoto who represented a new epoch for the GKJ, namely, the era of being an authentically Javanese church in the new Republic of Indonesia.

Probowinoto represented the second generation of the Javanese ministers of the GKJ. While the first generation was theologically equipped by a series of pragmatic courses (i.e. the "*cursus-Bakker*") in Javanese language, the second generation of the Javanese ministers was trained in the TOS (*Theologische Opleiding-School*) of Yogyakarta, using the Dutch and English languages. Besides having knowledge of their indigenous culture and Javanese language, they were able to read foreign articles, to evaluate critically the previous missionary approach of the Reformed mission, and to represent the Javanese church in international forums. These qualities were represented in the charismatic person of Probowinoto.

Born in 1917 in Central Java, Basuki Probowinoto had been educated in the HIK (*Hollandsch Inlandsche Kweekschool*, i.e. Teachers' School for the indigenous population), in the city of Solo, from 1932 to 1937, before he went to the TOS (*Theologische Opleiding School*, i.e. the Theological Training School) in Yogyakarta, Central Java, from 1937 to 1940. Both were using Dutch, so Probowinoto became a Javanese theologian who could participate in international forums as he was able to speak in English and Dutch besides in Javanese and Indonesian languages.

Having graduated from the theological school, he went to Jakarta and joined the indigenous Reformed congregation in the city. Subsequently he was ordained to be their minister in 1943. It was one year after the Japanese eradicated the Dutch administration in Indonesia, and European missionaries had to go to the prisoncamps, including his theological professors such as F.L. Bakker and J.D. Wolterbeek (De Jong 1997, 772, 790). Both survived and became witnesses of the end of Dutch colonialism and the dawn of the Indonesian republic.

Being a newly ordained minister of a Reformed church, Probowinoto started organizing his Javanese Christian network, following the historical current of his time (Kana and Daldjoeni 1987, 257-263). His ecclesiastical career included: (1) 1941-1943, he was a "vicar" in Kwitang, Jakarta; (2) 1943-1946, he was a local pastor of Jakarta; (3) 1946-1949, he was the office director of the synod of the GKJ in Yogyakarta; (4) 1949-1965, he was the office director of the synod of the GKJ in Salatiga (i.e. the unifying synod between the Javanese churches from the Northern and Southern parts of Central Java); (5) 1965-1967, he was both the secretary of general deputies of the synod of the GKJ in Salatiga and the director of the TPK (*Taman Pustaka Kristen*, i.e. the Reformed/Christian publishing company) in Yogyakarta; from 1967 till 1976, he worked for the Indonesian Bible Society; and finally, from 1976 till 1984, he continued his work for the Bible translation. From those ecclesiastical positions, he got involved in the creation of the Indonesian Christian Party in 1945 and of the Indonesian Council of Churches in 1949, besides his effort to unite some denominations of the Javanese churches in Central Java (i.e. the Mennonite GITJ, the Javanese churches coming from the Salatiga Zending, and the Javanese churches coming from the Reformed missions both in Southern and Northern parts of Central Java). Summarily, in the earliest time of the Indonesian republic, Probowinoto was a leading figure in the Indonesian Christianity representing the Reformed spirituality being put into practice in the country.

In a context, where most of the Javanese Reformed churches were abruptly cut off from their source of identity and it was a shock to see that they had forgotten their brothers and sisters with a Dutch background, Probowinoto stimulated a kind of "hermeneutics of responsibility" regarding the Javanese Christians' national duty to their country. He taught the Javanese Christians that they should diligently work in the Indonesian public areas by creating a Christian party, a national council of churches, and a unifying synod among different Javanese churches. The Reformed value, that the church should not be hiding in the shadow but should communicatively be confessing its faith in the public territory of the society, was embedded in this Javanese minister. On the other hand, to the Dutch side, Probowinoto represented the existence of the Javanese Christians, which had become inseparable from the Indonesian yearning for independence. He represented the indigenous Christians in the ecumenical gathering in Yogyakarta, in 1946. Likewise, he was present at the conference of Kwitang, in 1947, which recognized new, Indonesian congregations to be fully established churches; and by doing so expressed acknowledgement of their national independence. Eventually, he became an outspoken representative for the Javanese Christians in the 1948

Reformed Synod of Eindhoven, affirming clearly that the Indonesian people were really longing for political independence which ended the Dutch colonialism.

Probowinoto's effort gave an affirmative ground to a few people within the Reformed party in the Netherlands (ARP) who had sympathy for the Indonesian independence. In general, this party supported the government's line as to the military actions against the Republican forces of Indonesia. Although there were two so-called 'Police Actions', by the Indonesians called the two Dutch Military Aggressions from 1945 to 1949, the voice of the Indonesian people was eventually recognized by the supreme authority of the Crown of Holland as she acknowledged the independence of the new Indonesian state at the end of 1949.

In its fourth phase (1950-1965) the GKJ had to deal with the ongoing Indonesian Revolution (Sukarno era). The independence of Indonesia, proclaimed on August 17, 1945, was finally effectuated by the official recognition by the Dutch government on December 27, 1949. A new era had been born in the new Republic of Indonesia, with Sukarno to be its first legitimate president. The temptation however was proceeding, as the new country did not have a definitive constitution created by a legislative body and authorized through a legitimate general election. That means, the Indonesian revolution had not reached its closing stage by the withdrawal of Dutch political instruments. President Sukarno had to face difficult political situations, in which Indonesia had to struggle with its national unity, pluralism, and stability. The new president had to deal with Islamic radical separatists who wanted to create a theocratic regime in the Islamic state of Indonesia. On the other hand, he must also deal with the communists who wanted to create a communist state of Indonesia. Also, he was leading the new republic in the middle of the Cold War between Western-capitalist countries and Eastern-communist countries. In this context, he decided to unite the divergent political forces in the country under the primordial constitution of Indonesia, named to be the "UUD 1945" (*Undang-undang Dasar 1945*) pointing to the 1945 constitution which had been formulated at the dawn of the Indonesian republic. Standing for presidential supremacy and political integrity of Indonesia, the constitution was believed to be the vehicle of the original values of the founding fathers of Indonesia, so that Sukarno decided to grant it the highest rank of the Indonesian political reality by his Presidential Decree on July 5, 1959. By this decree, he tried to unite the three political forces in Indonesia, namely, the nationalists, the Islamic parties, and the communists. Likewise, he claimed the integrity of the Indonesian territory as it had been in the Netherlands Indies, as this was the background of the "UUD 1945." This he also claimed for West Papua, which was still under the Dutch administration in the 1960s. He was successful to have international support, especially from the United States, which wanted to restrain the communist influence upon Indonesia. Sukarno, however, did not want the US to create a political realm that he called new imperialism or capitalism in the South East Asia. In 1964, his supporters allowed him to become the Lifelong President of Indonesia, as he became the Supreme Commander of the ongoing revolution of Indonesia which could not be dictated either by Western or Eastern foreign forces.

In that kind of situation, in the period of 1950-1965, under the leadership of Probawinoto, the GKJ seems to have redefined its position from a Reformed church to a church which struggled to recognize its authentic nationality to be a part of Indonesian Christianity which might provide a significant contribution to the integrity of the Indonesian republic. Sukarno, at that time, believed that Indonesia was destined to be a unity in diversity; and that is the national value that he taught again and again to his people.

Toward that value, the GKJ responded by trying to promote ecclesial integrity among the several denominations using the Javanese language. As we saw above, starting in 1949, there was an effort to unite the Javanese churches in the Northern part of Central Java into one synod; but it unfortunately failed when the other Javanese churches refused to join the synod in the 1950s. The East-Java Church, i.e. the GKJW, continued to exist as a centrally organized synod in a *Hervormde* style of church management. Similarly, the Mennonite Javanese Church, i.e. the GITJ, continued to exist as a congregational, Anabaptist church, to be distinguished from the *Gereformeerde* style of church management. Finally, the Northern-Central Java Church, i.e. the GKJTU, claimed its existence to be an entity, separate from the synod of GKJ, as their historical roots did not have their origins in the Reformed mission but in the *Salatiga Zending* supported by the Neukirchen mission. The failure to unite the Javanese churches, however, did not reduce the national values regarding unity in diversity. The leadership of GKJ had always been trying to solve its disputes with a spirit of brother/sister-hood, as was shown when the GKJ had to face the rebellious movement of Kartosugondo who stubbornly claimed the independence of the GKJTU from the GKJ. In that case, the GKJ chose to believe that the unity among the Javanese churches is in fact always in diversity, so that there is no reason to see the GKJTU as the enemy of the GKJ. Hence it was proved that, despite the bitterness in the conflict, the GKJ has always been searching for a mutual partnership with the GKJTU. The national value regarding unity in diversity could in fact easily be achieved and contemplated by the GKJ, as it has also been a spiritual value of the Reformed tradition.

Under the leadership of the nationalist pastor Probowinoto, however, the focus of GKJ at the time was not aimed in the direction of the political arena but of strengthening its ecclesiastical foundations such as church order, human resources, and networking. For that purpose, the GKJ was continuously in relation with the synod of the GKN in the Netherlands. After the Kwitang Accord (1947), the Synod of Eindhoven (1948), and the Dutch recognition of the independence of Indonesia (1949), the relationship between the GKJ and the GKN was confirmed in the so-called Regional Accord (1950). This Regional Accord established platforms between a local church (congregation) of GKJ and a local congregation of the GKN, which agreed to work in the field of evangelization in Indonesia. Both local churches existed in accordance with the Reformed principles, i.e. that their local autonomy is always related to their own classis. In the Regional Accord, it was established that the evangelization of Java would be continued with a new strategy, where there were some local churches in the Netherlands, working together with some local Javanese churches in Indonesia in providing both financial and human resources. In this strategy, the weak points of the newborn Javanese churches could be handled by mutual assistance from the churches in the Netherlands, without eradicating the independence of the Javanese churches or reducing their national identity.

The Regional Accord provided the GKJ with large sums of money. Besides receiving help in the form of educated pastors from the Netherlands, the GKJ also received financial assistance for the salaries of its Javanese ministers and for creating and maintaining social works in society. With those kinds of assistance, the GKJ could create a new school of theology in Yogyakarta and a new Christian university in Salatiga. Likewise, it could maintain some Christian hospitals in Central Java and create new programs for social-economic developments. By so doing, the GKJ also became a partner of the Indonesian government, which was struggling to have political sovereignty without any debt to the foreign countries.

In the public arena, nevertheless, the GKJ had to deal with difficulties coming from two fronts. On the one hand, there were communists who believed that the church is the enemy of the people because it had always been inseparable from Western capitalism. On the other hand, there were Islamic radicals who believed that the church is always endangering their religious life. Hence, in order to neutralize these two fronts, the GKJ choose to focus on a non-political position. Although there was backup coming from Christian agents in the government, such as Johannes Leimena, at that time minister of Health in several cabinets, who tried to return some Christian hospitals back to church property, the public theology of the GKJ was fundamentally silent to the surrounding political environment.

This position changed in 1964, when President Sukarno faced a great challenge from the Western superpowers, which saw him as an agent of the communist power in South East Asia. To the North of Indonesia, there was a huge US military force fighting in Vietnam, and Indonesian politicians were dealing with the issue of a coming coup d'état that would destroy the state of Indonesia. In this context, the GKJ pronounced its political concern supporting Sukarno's position. The 1964 synod of GKJ sent a telegram to the president, saying:

May God give the president His abundant wisdom and power to be the leader of the Indonesian revolution, who must deal with complex political problems, to create a socialistic society of Indonesia which is united under the Pancasila²⁵ and to develop a new world order which is free from colonialism, imperialism, and neo-colonialism. (Akta Sidang 1964, art 18)

The telegram reflected the particular character of Reformed spirituality, namely, that a Christian church should not hide in the shadow but should confess its faith in the public realm. In times of trouble, when the state is in danger, the church should pronounce its prophetic voice showing the light of the divine grace in a particular historical juncture. Although Sukarno would fall as president several months later, the telegram became a significant evidence of the Reformed character of the GKJ regarding the existence of the state. It showed that the realm of the church is always somehow in connection with the realm of the state, so that the evangelical work of the church is always related to the political effort for the welfare of the state. This issue became more and more delicate in the next historical period after Sukarno, when the GKJ had to deal with the politics of the next president of the Indonesian republic, i.e. Soeharto

In the fifth phase (1965-1998) the GKJ took part in the Indonesian development during the Soeharto era. In 1965, there was a political tragedy in Indonesia. Several top military commanders of the Indonesian army had been kidnapped, tortured, and killed by the communists who believed that they were American agents endangering the safety of President Sukarno. The army responded by securing Sukarno's position, isolated him from public appearance, and destroyed the communist forces. The commander of the army was Soeharto, who put everybody related to the communist party into custody. His action caused a dramatic change in the parliament; the members of the parliament were replaced by representatives partly coming from the army. They rejected Sukarno's political position and elected Soeharto to be the new president of Indonesia.

Soeharto's political strategy was to blame communists for all national problems. This strategy was very effective, as the Indonesians would never forget the 1965 tragedy that took about half a million lives of communists and others. Likewise, the strategy was sustained by a quasi-democratic political construction in Indonesia, sustained by the 1945 constitution (i.e.

²⁵The *Pancasila* is the state ideology of Indonesia, including the five principles as follows: (1) believing in One God, (2) humanity, (3) unity of Indonesia, (4) democracy, and (5) social justice.

UUD 1945) and the national ideology of Pancasila (i.e. the five principles of the state regarding: believing in one God, humanity, unity of Indonesia, democracy, and social justice). In that kind of political construction, the Soeharto administration claimed that it was managing Indonesia in a securely democratic way, sustained by people coming from the army who were present in almost every layer of civil administration. This strategy gave the regime the possibility to remain in power for thirty-two years (1966-1998).

In this context, the GKJ struggled to understand its ecclesial calling under the shadow of Soeharto's militarism, personified in the Indonesian constitution and national ideology (i.e. UUD 1945 and the Pancasila). In this period, a generation of critical theologians arrived in the GKJ. They refused to blindly submit themselves to the authoritarian government, which tried to tell the church that the regime was a good fortress securing the Indonesian Christians from the Islamic powers in the country. They believed that the church has to rely only on God and to articulate its prophetic voice to the government. Through these critical Javanese theologians, the GKJ redefined its confession of faith into a new catechism, i.e. the PPAG, in 1997.

During the most recent, sixth phase (1998-2012) the GKJ participated in the co-called Indonesian Reformation. After the fall of Soeharto, the PPAG was widely accepted by the younger generation of the GKJ. The PPAG stimulated a church renewal by being committed to the social ground of the church in the Indonesian society. Some people saw the weaknesses of the PPAG and tried to secure its authority by calling for a revision. By their revision, a new text of the PPAG came into being in 2006. Their revision has provided proof that there is an effort to reach a compromise between the "old" Reformed theology (i.e. which emphasized the Glory of God) and the "new" Javanese-Reformed theology (i.e. which emphasized the responsibility of man).

Struggle for an Authentic Confession of the GKJ

Four Issues

As said earlier, on February 17, 1931, the first synod of GKJ was held in Kebumen (Sinode GKJ 1931, 1). It was the first time for the Javanese Christians organized by the *Gereformeerde* mission to have an 'ecumenical' conference called the synod. The synod started by enlisting several topics from the representatives of the respective classis. There were eight questions to be discussed for affirmative answers. Those questions are, firstly, how the various local churches should be organized in harmony; secondly, what kind of unifying instrument would provide the nature of the denomination; thirdly, what kind of hymnal would shape the character of the denomination; fourthly, what kind of liturgical formula would give quality to the theological principles of the denomination; fifthly, what should be the formula of administration that might serve the unity among local churches in the denomination; sixthly, concerning the possibility of a person's mental corruption, should the church ask him/her for a regular standard of morality; seventhly, concerning individual Christian not yet confessing his/her own faith, should the church give to him/her the same ministerial service as to the regular church members; and finally, eighthly, in order to improve the quality of church leaders, should the church found a theological school. Among those questions, we can find at least four issues that have been lingering for decades over many ecumenical synods of the GKJ until 1990s. These four issues include: *confession of faith, church order, hymnal, and liturgical formula*.

Regarding *the first issue*, the first synod acknowledged that the confession of faith is the unifying instrument that would provide the nature of the denomination. The train of thought on this issue is worthily noted here as follows:

Barang katah ingkang bade dipoen toenggilaken poenika mesti wonten wewaton oetawi tetangsoel ingkang kangge njatoenggilaken oetawi malih barang ingkang noenggil dasar lan kawontenan. Lah manunggilipoen Pasamoewan Christen poenika kedah ngangge wewaton, tetangsoel lan dedasar poenapa? Boten wonten malih-malih kedjawi namoeng sarana Pangandikanipoen Goesti Allah kemawon. . . . Noenggilipoen Pasamoewan Christen oegi sarana ingkang dados pengakening pitadosipoen (sanesipoen sahadat 12 ingkang oemoem). Sanadjan Pasamoewan2 kita dereng gadah pangakening pitados ingkang kangge nampik penganggep (piwoelang) nasar (awit dereng wonten perloenipoen), ewadene inggih dipoen-anggep lan dipoen angge dening sedaya Pasamoewan Gereformeerd. . . . Mila Synode dipoen-atoeri apratela, bilih panampinipoen datang ing Piwoelang Agami Christen (Heidelbergische Catechismus). Pakempalan inggih sami roedjoek, temah apratela bilih ingkang kadamel wewaton lan dasaring panoenggilipoen Pasamoewan Christen poenika soeraosipoen Kitab Soetji, inggih mitoeroet katrangan, ingkang kamot ing Piwoelang Agami Christen waoe. (Sinode GJK 1931, 7)

English translation of the quotation:

Different things could be bound together by a unifying principle providing a common ground for the co-existing state. Then, what is the unifying principle for the Christian church? There is no unifying principle but the Word of God. . . . Likewise, the church unity is provided also by a particular confession of faith (next to the Twelve Articles of the Apostles' Creed that has a general character). But our churches did not yet have their own particular confession in which heretical opinions are challenged (because this was not yet necessary). What we are having now is only the confession of faith of the *Gereformeerd* tradition. . . . Therefore, the synod should clearly express that she is accepting the Teachings of Christian Religion [i.e. Heidelberg Catechism]. The synod gathering has decided that the unifying principle for our churches is the Word of God being systematically taught in the Teachings of Christian Religion [i.e. Heidelberg Catechism].

Regarding *the second issue*, the first synod acknowledged that the various local churches in the GJK should be organized in harmony by establishing a church order that could shape their fellowship meaningfully according to the values of Christian faith. Here is the deliberative thought of the first synod on this issue:

Wontenipun pranata oetawi Kerken-Order poenika djalaran saking wontenipoen prekawis-prekawis ingkang kedah dipoen tata, mila sampoen ngantos damel pranatan roemijin. Prajogi nitipriksa prekawis kalih ingkang sampoen wonten oetawi toemindak ing salebeting Pasamoewan. Sasampoenipoen mekaten ladjeng wiwit damel pranatan kangge nata prekawis kalih waoe. Saja mindak katahing prekawis lan saja ewah kawontenaning Pasamoewan, pranatan inggih dados saja wewah lan owah-owah. Dados boten namoeng adjeg kemawon. Patrap mekaten, pranatan ladjeng tjotjog kalijan ingkang dipoen tata, temah saged maedahi dateng Pasamoewan. Djer pranata poenika dede pamisesa ingkang meksa, nanging satoenggaling patrap saking pamilihhipoen Pasamoewan pijambak ingkang dipoen anggep tjondong kalijan kersanipoen Goesti Allah kangge nata kawontenanipoen piyambak. (Sinode GJK 1931, 5)

English translation of the quotation:

The existence of a church order is necessary because there are things to be put in order; and we should not establish any church order if there is none to be put in order. Admittedly, in the church, we should have knowledge about two things simultaneously, viz. matters that already exist or can occur within the whole church. After that, we are ready to develop a church order. Gradually, there will be problems increasing in number due to the changes in the church. In this case, the church order should also be changing. By this kind of nature, the church order will not be an external oppressive force but an internal order of awareness, which has come to be the fruit of free choice of conscience concerning matters that are believed to be the will of God.

Regarding *the third issue*, the first synod reflected the influence of the *Gereformeerd* theology about singing in the church, as it stated, that at the base of the hymnal there are to be

the biblical Psalms. At that time, this theological principle was amalgamated with the publication of two different hymnals among the Javanese Christian communities, as we saw earlier. That is the KPK (*Kidoeng Pasamoewan Kristen*) and *Mazmoer 150* (the 150 Psalms), created by the Reformed missionary Klaas van Dijk. While the first had an inter-denominational character as it had become a collective property of four Javanese denominations, the latter was based on the Reformed theological principles. In this case, the synod faced the dilemma of choosing approaches either practical or theological. As the Javanese religiosity is induced with a kind of belief that nature will choose the one that would fit to be its natural part, the synod solved this dilemma by giving the two hymnals an equal opportunity to exist in the GKJ, saying:

Synode ngroemaosi lan ngakeni bilih Masmoer 150 poenika ingkang patoet lan sembada pijambak kangge pamoedjinipoen Pasamoewan Christen, awit Masmoer poenika saking peparingipoen Goesti Allah pijambak, lantaran pamangsitipoen Roh Soetji dateng oemat kagoenganipoen, wiwit kina makina . . . Mila Pasamoewan Christen pangangenipoen dateng Masmoer kedah dipoen tengenaken, katimbang kidoeng2 ingkang saking anggitanipoen manoesa tanpa pamangsitipoen Roh Soetji . . . Synode inggih oegi roemaos bilih Pasamoewan perloe ngangge pamoedji saking Kidoeng2 sapinten ingkang njondongi kalijan Pangandikanipoen Goesti Allah, awit pantji katah paedahipoen dhateng Pasamoewan Kristen, lan inggih karana ngengeti dateng Pasamoewan2 ingkang sampoen sami ngangge Kidoeng sapoenika, ngiras kangge nandakaken anggenipoen toemoet pakempalan sanes djalaran ingkang kangge memoedji sami kemawon. (Sinode GKJ 1931, 8)

English translation of the quotation:

The synod admits and acknowledges that the hymnal of the Christian church should be only the 150 Psalms, as they are written in the Bible as the divine gifts coming from God himself by the power of the Holy Spirit in the ancient church . . . Therefore, our use of the Psalms should be more and more intensified rather than of other songs produced by people without the Holy Spirit's endowment [...] Yet the synod also believes that the church might utilize a number of hymns [i.e. the ones found within the *Kidoeng Pasamoewan Kristen*, the hymnal of the Christian church] which express the Word of God, as those songs are being of so much help for the Christian believers, and as we are admitting that the churches that have already used that Kidoeng (i.e. the KPK) are our fellows, and so by doing that we are witnessing that our church unity is not based on the principle of formal similarity.

Eventually, regarding *the fourth issue* on the liturgical formula, the first synod reflected its theological dependence upon the Reformed mission. Even though the GKJ has had complete ecclesiastical offices such as elders, deacons, and ministers of the Word, it did not have theologians who had been trained in higher education. Accordingly, it was reasonable that the synod found it difficult to formulate a liturgical formula, containing synthetic theological perspectives of the ancient church and the Reformed tradition being contextualized into the cultural environment of the Javanese Christians' religiosity. The difficulties are reflected in the synod's determination, saying:

Wontena pratelan werni satoenggil kemawon lan mboten mawi patokan rowa oetawi ringkes, nanging njekapi ing kaperloewan. . . . Sarehning Pasamoewan Djawi ingkang katah dereng saged damel pratelan2 waoe pijambak, sanadjan oepami wontena ingkang saged temtoenipoen katah koetjiwanipoen, awit dereng nate toer kirang kawroeh sanget, pramila prekawis poenika prajogi kawoewoenaken toeloeng dateng parepatanipoen para pandita Welandi malih, dasar poenika ingkang kadadosaken bapa, goeroe lan djoeroe pirembagipoen Pasamoewan Djawi tanemanipoen, toer sampoen baoet ing bab poenika. Sasampenipoen dados ladjeng kaparingaken dateng Synode Djawi ingkang bade wonten ing ngadjeng, oegi ladjeng kapriksakaken dateng Synode ing negari Welandi soepados tetelaa jen wonten patoenggilanipoen pasamoewan ngriki lan ngrika. (Sinode GKJ 1931, 10)

English translation of the quotation:

There should be only one liturgical formula [i.e. to be used for administering sacraments and intentional services], which should not be just a long or brief rule but which can be of help to the service of the church. . . . Because the Javanese Church has not been able to create such formula by itself, and there is no one who claims that he has the capacity to do that, the result of the process would be disappointing. Our theological resources are very limited. Therefore, this case should be solved by asking help from the conference of the Dutch missionaries, regarding their existence to be as fathers and teachers for the Javanese Church and to be as mediators between the church here and the church in the Netherlands to manifest our unity.

The four issues above indicated that the young Javanese church was in a serious quest for the knowledge of God and of itself, asking for an understanding about the roots of Christian religion and the place of Javanese Christianity in the world religion. Firstly, the question about an original confession of faith ensued since 1931 until the establishment of the PPAG (*Pokok-pokok Ajaran Gereja*, the Main dogmatic teachings of the Church) by the 1996 synod. Secondly, the question of the church order has been remaining even though there were efforts to clarify the theological context of a problematic ecclesiastical opinion. In the 1932 synod, it was decided that the GKJ should adopt the Dort Church Order to maintain its ecclesiastical structure in the communion of the Reformed tradition. In the 1949 synod, unifying the GKJ from the Southern and Northern parts of Central Java, a committee was appointed to create a new church order for the unifying GKJ (Sinode GKJ 1949, article 13). In 1951, the committee submitted a draft, which maintained the 1932 church order but provided a supplement containing theological perspectives about ecclesiastical law. The draft was submitted by the committee, assisted by missionary J.A.C. Rullmann (Sinode GKJ 1950 article 86-xiv-xv; Sinode GKJ 1951 article 3; Sinode GKJ 1953 article 52 lampiran 6 G). The draft was given a title *Pembanguning Sariranipun Sang Kristus* [i.e., the Development of the Body of Christ] and then became a kind of academic text by which the GKJ church leaders learned about a theology of ecclesiastical law until the 1984 synod pronounced a new church order, at a time when the GKJ started to have a new generation of theologians committed to a process of restructuring the church. Then, the 1984 church order was eventually replaced in 1999, when the PPAG was accepted by the synod to be its confession of faith. Thirdly, the quest for a legitimate hymnal also persistently coloured the synods of GKJ from 1931 to 2002 when the church decided to publish a revised edition of the 1929 Javanese-Christian hymnal (Sinode GKJ 2002, article 16). This edition was created as a product of collaboration among the four Javanese-Christian denominations (*viz.* GKJW, GITJ, GKJTU, GKJ). In order to preserve the very long process of revision since the first edition of the Javanese-Christian hymnal in 1929, the four denominations decided to conserve the title of the classical hymnal, namely, the KPK (*Kidung Pasamuwan Kristen*). Fourthly, the question of the liturgical formula never ended. Stimulated by the 1984 church order, the movement for liturgical renewal has been continuing in the GKJ. Furthermore, since the endorsement of the PPAG, the spirit of liturgical renewal has become more and more complicated as it is questioning the access to the ancient tradition of Christianity, namely, the spiritual tradition of the Catholic Church, which in the sixteenth century had become the opponent of the Reformed tradition. As a conclusion, it can be said here that the four lingering issues indicate that since the very beginning of its history the very ground of the GKJ has always been questioning its identity, as it continues its quest for an authentic spirituality.

Quest for Articulating an Original Faith-Confession of GKJ: A New Catechism

The four lingering issues above brought about an awareness within the GKJ, that it needs an integrative approach. Firstly, it should have a confession of faith that becomes a new catechism for the denomination; secondly, the confession of faith in behalf of the catechism should be implemented in the church order, liturgical formula, and the hymnal. By this

awareness, the GKJ focused its energy to produce the PPAG, the new catechism of the denomination.

The PPAG: A New Catechism of the GKJ

The Story of a Reformed Javanese Pastor: The Author of the PPAG

In 1996, the synod of GKJ acknowledged that the author of the PPAG was Rev. Brotosemedi whose manuscript had been adopted to be the dogmatic document concerning the confession of faith of the Reformed Javanese church (Sinode GKJ 1996, Article 25). His name has been written in several ways such as "Broto Semedi" or "Brotosemedi Wirjotenojo." He was the son of the second Javanese ordained minister Wirjotenojo.²⁶

Brotosemedi was a humble man and he treated any information regarding his biography very carefully in order that nobody would be able to create a mystifying myth about his personal background. He wanted to be seen as an ordinary man, especially in the sense that he belonged to the lower class of society. He therefore did not talk much about his family history. Only to a few people did he communicate his personal biography; among them was Heru Soekotjo who wrote the life story of the architect of the PPAG (Soekotjo 2010, 126-145). In the following paragraphs of this section, the description of Brotosemedi's biography will rely on information coming from that book.

Brotosemedi was born on October 30, 1930, in a village named Tlepok Wetan, in the "*regentschap* Kutoardjo" as it was called in the time of the Netherlands-Indies (Soekotjo 2010, 13). His parents were Samidjo Wirjotenojo and Marianne; both were Javanese Christians who had grown up on the native soil of Javanese religiosity in interaction with the Reformed tradition of the Dutch missionaries. Samidjo became Christian when he was an early teenager; and Marianne was a Christian by birth coming from a lower rank of the royal court in Yogyakarta. Brotosemedi was the seventh child of twelve children in the family; he had eight brothers and three sisters. When he was born, his father Wirjotenojo had already been ordained to be the minister of the GKJ in Tlepok. His childhood was shaped by the village situation of Tlepok. When his father Wirjotenojo was called by the GKJ to the small city of Kutoarjo, in 1938, the eight year old Brotosemedi also moved to the city, where he received his basic education in the CHJS (*Christelijke Hollandse Javaanse School*), a Christian missionary school using *Nederlands* as the interactive language for the Javanese children. The school's name was Siswo Wijoto (i.e. Education of Students) (Soekotjo 2010, 28).

Among the children of Wirjotenojo, Brotosemedi was the weakest one (Soekotjo 2010, 30). Since his childhood his physical condition was influenced by heart problems; his voice was very soft and low, and he was not as intelligent as his brothers and sisters. When he was in the fourth grade of the basic school, he could not pass the examination to go to the next level;

²⁶The name Wirjotenojo can be found as "J. Wirjotenojo" in some of the Dutch historical sources about the GKJ. The way the name "J. Wirjotenojo" is written, is a mistake, as it should be "S. Wirjotenojo" since his first name is "Samidjo." See Wirjotenojo, *Autobiografi*. Unpublished manuscript in the archives room of the GKJ's Synod office. – In Wirjotenojo's hand writing, the letter "S" indeed has been written in an artistic way, and therefore it could be interpreted as a letter "J" by those people who do not know his first name. From his father Wirjotenojo, Brotosemedi inherited not only a spirituality of ministry dedicated to the marginalized people but also a serious concern to the formulation of a true faith confession of the GKJ.

in order to reduce his psychological stress, his father had him moved to another city of Magelang, in order to reclaim his fourth grade in a different school.

Because of his physical condition his parents paid more special attention to him than to the other children. Since his childhood, he was not allowed by his mother and father to eat meat. When their mother served meat for the whole family, she included a special portion without meat for him. Similarly, when the whole family enjoyed a dinner with meat on the dining table, his father would never allow this son to receive it. In the mind of Brotosemedi, a voice of the father kept him away from animal protein, "Broto, do you know why your father does not allow you to eat meat? It is because your face shines through a kind of clear aura. If you eat meat, that would be endangering you due to your hard nature. But if you can discipline yourself not to eat meat, while your family enjoys it, this will be a spiritual exercise for you. And you are able to conquer yourself" (Soekotjo 2010, 49). During his whole life, this background created a particular habit for Brotosemedi; he would never eat meat. By doing so, he managed to control his heart condition and got rewarded by becoming eighty-three-years old. This special attention from his parents, especially his mother, created in Brotosemedi a kind of psychological devotion to them, as if Brotosemedi would do anything to honour his parents and especially his mother.

In 1955, when Brotosemedi was studying philosophy in Yogyakarta, his mother was ill and communicated to him her personal request, "Broto, your father is a minister. He has nine sons but it seems that not even one wants to be a minister. You are going to be a minister, aren't you?" (Soekotjo 2010, 56). He replied affirmatively as to the request and changed the subject of his study. He left the Fakultas Sastra, Pedagogik dan Filsafat (faculty of literature, pedagogy and philosophy) of the Gadjah Mada state university in Yogyakarta and went to the Jakarta Theological Seminary in 1956.

Having studied theology in the capital of Indonesia, he received his bachelors degree in 1961 (Soekotjo 2010, 62). Subsequently, he was ordained to be a minister of the GKJ in 1962 and served a Christian congregation in the rural community of Gombang in Central Java. However, because his intellectual talents were already known by the elite circles of Christians in Indonesia, he was asked to pursue an academic career at a Christian university which desired to open a new faculty of theology. The name of the university was Satya Wacana Christian University in Salatiga, Central Java.

Accordingly, in 1966, he joined this university and in 1969 became the first dean of the new faculty of theology. He led the faculty until 1981; shortly after that year he resigned from the faculty and became a professor of theology in another faculty of Satya Wacana University. The reason for his resignation is unclear, but Soekotjo has mentioned two major hypotheses: an internal conflict in the theological faculty and the rumor that he held heretical opinions (Soekotjo 2010, 93-99).

The second issue was very provocative because in fact Brotosemedi had a critical perspective towards the two towering figures of dogmatic discourse in the Reformed circles in Central Java. These authorities were Harun Hadiwijono, the rector of the Duta Wacana School of Theology in Yogyakarta, and Soedarmo, the rector of the Jakarta Theological Seminary (Soekotjo 2010, 117). Both were senior ministers of GKJ and held authoritative positions in the field of dogmatics. Since 1969, Brotosemedi and Harun Hadiwijono had been working together in the same taskforce of the GKJ synod to create a new catechism; and similarly since 1974 Soedarmo had become Brotosemedi's promoter for his doctoral degree at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Nevertheless, Brotosemedi's opinion toward these two outstanding

professors was irreconcilable. In the discourse of the new catechism of the GKJ Harun Hadiwijono tried to maintain a close relationship to the Reformed dogmatic tradition (as it is reflected in his book *Kawula Pitados*), while Brotosemedi endorsed a new approach toward the dogmatic discourse by relying much more on the role of the teacher rather than the code of orthodoxy yearning for a precise dogmatic formula in the text of catechism (as it is reflected in the volume *Berkumpul di Sekitar Kristus*). Similarly, in the Reformed dogmatical discourse, in which Soedarmo as a professor in the Jakarta Theological Seminary and as his supervisor and promotor at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam played an important role, Brotosemedi maintained his phenomenological approach arguing that man, by the power of reason, can only recognize the divine soteriological activity in the creation of human existence. Soedarmo held to the orthodox approach of revelation believing that man, by the power of faith, can recognize not only the work of God but also God Himself as Christ had revealed His divinity in the natural order of humanity. As Brotosemedi did not change his position, and Soedarmo never gave his approval to his Ph.D. manuscript, the doctoral promotion was discontinued. To continue the process a new promotor would be needed, yet Brotosemedi never asked for anyone (Soekotjo 2010, 120). He honoured Soedarmo as his true teacher, as a Javanese student traditionally does to his spiritual and intellectual master. Even so, while the two professors became the towering figures of dogmatics in the GKJ, Brotosemedi did not step into their shadow. He maintained his theological position by elaborating his theological approach in his faculty of theology in Salatiga. He rewrote his doctoral manuscript to be a series of theological lectures which he used for training his students to use their rational capacity in the matters of faith. The series of lectures of this theological course was published by the synod of GKJ, in 1992, in a book *Alkitab Firman Allah Sekaligus Firman Manusia* ("The Bible as the Word of God as well as the word of man").²⁷ This book has become the draft of the future PPAG. However, considering that the issue of his heretical opinion could be very harmful to the faculty of theology, Brotosemedi resigned from the faculty in order to secure its reputation (Soekotjo 2010, 94).

Brotosemedi's resignation from the faculty of theology in 1981 was the beginning of what one might call to be his baptism of fire. Apparently something was wrong in the recruiting staff of the faculty of theology he had been leading and he was immersed into an ecclesial-political intrigue regarding the orthodoxy of his theological teaching. Yet, it was just the beginning of a painful path of his commitment to a ministry, which has a prophetic nature. It was the time when the power of Soeharto's regime was most oppressive upon the civil society in Indonesia. A first fruit of this prophetic commitment can be seen in an edition of the courses in the field of dogmatics which he gave during the first semester of 1982-1983 about Man and fundamental Human Rights, at that repressive time certainly a hot issue.²⁸ In the years 1983-1984, the regime committed what one might call 'dark justice', i.e. the execution of alleged criminals without litigation (Ben Anderson 2001, 18). Many individuals being stigmatized as criminal died, since the regime had so much power above the system of law in the country; and ironically there was no moral reprimand coming from the church, either from the national Council of Churches in Indonesia (DGI, *Dewan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia*) or from the GKJ synod's deputies. In such a situation, Brotosemedi wrote a personal letter to President Soeharto, asking him to stop the inhuman approach of the regime. The regime informed both the DGI and the GKJ synod's deputies about this letter; and subsequently, having already the reputation of being an eccentric minister who might endanger the church and Christians in Indonesia in general, Brotosemedi was put in a disgraceful situation. Newspapers in Central Java refused any longer to publish his articles

²⁷See Wiryoteno 1992.

²⁸See Wiryoteno, 1983.

and columns. Yet, he never regretted his critique to the regime and continued his prophetic mission, which—as was written in an obituary—according to him reflected the self-respect of the Reformed (gereformeerde) church. ‘And in any case, this way I can give account to the Lord.’²⁹ This can be seen again in another courageous book he wrote, also the result of courses, this time given at the faculty of Social Sciences of Satya Wacana University in 1984-1985, about religious tolerance based upon the Pancasila.³⁰

In 1985, the Soeharto's regime announced a state regulation requiring all organizations in Indonesia to mention officially the state ideology of Pancasila in their statutes, namely the Indonesian law of UU RI no. 8/1985. By doing so, the regime was identifying itself as the defender of Pancasila so that consequently all forms of opposition became the enemy of the state. The state regulation cornered the GKJ (like other churches) into a difficult situation. Theologically speaking, it is difficult to understand how a confessing church of Christ can be dictated by an oppressive regime that she should reprimand Brotosemedi. He asked the synod not to be subordinated by the government and stubbornly refused the idea that the synod should take a refuge in the government (Sinode GKJ 1987, art. 47:7). The church should be brave even in times of trouble, as the church of Christ in the world should confess its commitment to God's soteriological activity upon humanity. Even though it would mean entering martyrdom, the church should take the side of the victims rather than of the oppressors; it should have a preferential option for the poor, so to speak. However, the oppressive nature of the regime, the shadow of 1965-1966 massacres upon communists, and the actual difficulties with Islam, hovered above the debate when this matter was discussed in the 1987 synod of GKJ. This synodal meeting decided to formulate a draft of the new statutes, accepting that the GKJ could allow its members to recognize the Pancasila to be the principle for a social and national life according to the state of Indonesia (Sinode GKJ 1987, art. 78, 4). By doing so, the synod tried to protect the purity of her institutional church as the true confessional church of Christ that cannot be swallowed by the state. The only thing the regime could do, was requiring a personal acknowledgement from the church members who could use their freedom to obey their instructions; but the regime could not force the institutional body of the church. Unfortunately, the draft was rejected by the state official, who explicitly asked the church as an institution to recognize the Pancasila. By doing so the regime explicitly wanted the institutional body of the church to be its official partner. As the deputies could not decide upon such a delicate matter without a synod, they had to wait until 1989 before the GKJ synod could seriously talk about this matter. After a series of deliberations, the synod eventually followed the approach of the Indonesian Catholic Bishops' Conference, saying that the church confesses that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world and by the light of this confession recognizes Pancasila to be the principle for living socially, nationally, and accordingly to the state of Indonesia (Sinode GKJ 1989, art. 95). Once again, Brotosemedi was defeated by the powerful regime whose power was infiltrating the church, but this case had made him stronger. He became a new prophetic icon of spirituality for the church members of the GKJ, especially for the young generation of ministers yearning for a pious but intellectual theologian as church leader.

The draft of the PPAG, which he submitted to the synod of GKJ in the 1990s, was constructed under the above circumstances. The draft reflected Brotosemedi's life, in his preferential option for the poor and marginalized people, which he articulated to be the subject of God's soteriological activity. Themes from Brotosemedi's above mentioned writings and ideas can be easily traced in this PPAG. Without understanding the life and

²⁹ www.gkj.or.id, accessed on May 28, 2013.

³⁰ See Wiryotenoyo, [1986]

work of its author, the reading of the PPAG would be misleading. As other legendary confessions in the Reformed tradition such as the Belgic Confession, the Articles of Dort, the Westminster Confession, etc., the PPAG is a text in behalf of confessing the Christian faith in the public realm in Indonesia, which for many decades has been in a crisis. It should be read with an understanding of its context manifesting the struggle for articulating and witnessing the message of the Gospel in a challenging world.

Two Editions of the PPAG

There are two editions of the PPAG. The first one came from the hands of Brotosemi. The second one is an official revision by the GKJ Synod, after intensive negotiations. The 1997 edition of PPAG consists of five chapters. Chapter one includes only one subject, titled "The teaching of the church" about the existence of doctrine, which in a sense could be pointing to the church's magisterial authority to formulate the substantial meaning of the Scriptures. This topic is composed of several questions and answers³¹ discussing matters about: why the church needs to have a doctrine³²; what is the meaning of the doctrine for the church³³ as well as for the church's members³⁴; whereas the church and its members already have the Bible, why this doctrine is needed³⁵ and how it is related to the Bible³⁶; why this doctrine is to be seen as a sacred teaching³⁷, whereas it has only a temporal state; how the church should perform its attitude toward its doctrine³⁸; and how the church/GKJ should relate to earlier definitions of its doctrine, i.e. the Heidelberg Catechism.³⁹

Chapter two of the PPAG also has only one subject, titled "The Bible" referring to the origin, the function, and the authority of the Scriptures. It is composed of fourteen questions and answers⁴⁰ that concisely elaborate: what does it mean when the church says that the Bible is the Word of God⁴¹; how is the Bible related to the soteriological activity of God⁴²; how does, in the creation of the Bible, the Holy Spirit cooperate with human freedom⁴³; why does the church (i.e. GKJ) accept the Protestant canon of the Bible⁴⁴; why are there two testaments in the Bible⁴⁵; what is the importance of the Bible for the church and its members⁴⁶; and what does it mean that the Bible has a functional position as to the soteriological activity of God in his divine effort to create salvation upon humanity.⁴⁷

Then, in chapter three, PPAG gives a long discourse explicating the soteriological activity of God and its relationship to the church. This includes six points. Firstly, it points to the fact that human beings are creatures who always have corrupted elements in their existence, revealing that they are living in a world which is not in relationship with God; they are

³¹ PPAG 1997, number 1-12.

³² PPAG 1997, number 1.

³³ PPAG 1997, number 2.

³⁴ PPAG 1997, number 3.

³⁵ PPAG 1997, number 4 and 5.

³⁶ PPAG 1997, number 6, 7, and 12.

³⁷ PPAG 1997, number 8 and 9.

³⁸ PPAG 1997, number 10.

³⁹ PPAG 1997, number 11.

⁴⁰ PPAG 1997, number 13-26.

⁴¹ PPAG 1997, number 13.

⁴² PPAG 1997, number 14-15.

⁴³ PPAG 1997, number 16-20.

⁴⁴ PPAG 1997, number 21.

⁴⁵ PPAG 1997, number 22.

⁴⁶ PPAG 1997, number 23.

⁴⁷ PPAG 1997, number 24-25.

wretches and living under an eternal curse of being adversary toward God.⁴⁸ Secondly, it points to the evangelical message that God does not leave behind the wretched human beings who have been made by the divine love and wisdom. In historical reality, God ventures His soteriological activity toward human beings by presenting the three events of salvation, namely, the event of Israel, the event of Christ, and the event of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁹ By doing so, thirdly, the church sees that there is One God working the three events of salvation as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and because of this, the church believes in the Triune God.⁵⁰ Fourthly, the activity of the Triune God reveals that it is God's will to save all human beings but the divine will does not eliminate the free will of humanity, so that His universal will does not automatically make everyone have a positive attitude towards the salvational activity of God and be saved accordingly; and this means that this activity of God does not remove the human responsibility in making personal choices for one's own salvation.⁵¹ Fifthly, the universal will of God, in the activities of the Trinity, and the personal responsibility of humanity toward God's soteriological activity reveals that the human salvation is always in an historical journey toward the future. Never would the true salvation be fixed and motionless, because it is always in an ongoing process toward hope and perfection of the future, based on unchangeable-determinative facts of the past and the challenging events of the present in the course of human existence. Never does the eternal seal of salvation become evident in the form of any human achievement but the presence of the Holy Spirit alone is facilitating a relationship between God and human persons. Therefore, human salvation cannot be reduced into a state of ideological confidence in such a dogmatic statement as that Christians cannot lose their salvation because they have been redeemed by the irresistible grace of God; on the contrary, always the human salvation will be floating on temporal situations challenging personal responsibility of individual human beings. The seal of salvation is divine but the response toward it is always human; hence, thankfulness and responsibility are the adequate human attitudes and this implies that the human ability to respond to God's soteriological activity is manifesting freedom as the natural talent of humanity.⁵² Sixthly, when people responding to the soteriological activity of God are united, there the church comes into being, working out the life of salvation in the world.⁵³

Then, in chapter four, the PPAG explores the existence of the church in the world. In order to cultivate the three substances of the church, namely to perform its confessional faith, to contemplate and to express its devotional life, and to maintain its function in the salvational activity of God in the world, the church should be facilitated by its ecclesiastical order.⁵⁴ At the bottom line, the core business of the ecclesiastical order is not only to manage the formal aspects of Christian religion but more importantly to serve the spirituality of Christian life. In the life of the church, the spirituality of Christian life is carried out into the visible realm by two major instruments of faith, namely, the religious service and the sacrament.⁵⁵

Furthermore, in chapter five, the PPAG elaborates a theology of witnessing the faith in the world. It believes that the world is fundamentally good, as it has come from the creational activity of God. At the base, although there are suffering and predicament rooted in human

⁴⁸ PPAG 1997, number 27-35.

⁴⁹ PPAG 1997, number 36-47.

⁵⁰ PPAG 1997, number 48-57.

⁵¹ PPAG 1997, number 58-69.

⁵² PPAG 1997, number 70-78.

⁵³ PPAG 1997, number 79-112.

⁵⁴ PPAG 1997, number 113-125.

⁵⁵ PPAG 1997, number 126-151.

sinfulness, the nature of the world is good, as it becomes the arena of God's soteriological activity.⁵⁶ However, since the divine activity is always embedded in the reality of human life, the soteriological activity of God should be found in the real life by the process of ethical discernment using the faculties of human mind, intellect, and will. It should be experienced by using human freedom and responsibility guided by the hidden activity of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believers who have to make active efforts to understand and to obey the will of God.⁵⁷ The major themes of ethical discernment include the Christian attitudes toward natural world,⁵⁸ science and technology,⁵⁹ secularism,⁶⁰ the realm of the state,⁶¹ the biblical principles for the existence of the state,⁶² the power of the state,⁶³ human religiosity,⁶⁴ and variety of religions.⁶⁵ The golden rules for ethical discernment would be love formulated in the Bible as the law of God, comprising the love of God illustrated on the first tablet of the Decalogue,⁶⁶ and the love of human neighbours illustrated on the second tablet of the Decalogue.⁶⁷ By realizing the golden rule concretely, the church manifests the Christian faith in the Triune God, who performs the salvational activity in history, as it is formulated in the Apostles' Creed.⁶⁸ Eventually, as the active dimension of faith should be framed by the power of the Holy Spirit providing and perfecting the divine plan of salvation among humanity, the church should internally contemplate and externally express its prayerful life in which the believers experience intimate communication with God.⁶⁹

Eventually, at the very end of the PPAG, there is a formula of commitment that should be signed by the ones to be ordained as church leaders, namely, the elders, the deacons, and the ministers of the Word. The formula states that they acknowledge the PPAG to be the principles of Christian faith of the GKJ, and that they will manage a daily life according to the Bible based on the teachings of the PPAG.

The 2005 edition of PPAG is a revision of the 1997 edition. The revision does not change the basic tenets of the original edition. For the most part, it does not change the theological principle, but only gives several editorial changes concerning wording and structuring. The grand structure of the original manuscript is preserved, with small changes in the distribution of topics so that the five chapters in the original text have become six in the revised edition. The six chapters include the existence of doctrine, the function and authority of the Bible, the soteriological activity of God, the church and its ecclesiastical order, the Christian life in the world, and the church's four spiritual heritages namely the Decalogue, the Golden Rule, the Apostles' Creed, and prayerful life framed by the Lord's Prayer.

In chapter one, the 2005 edition explains that the PPAG is to be the GKJ's doctrine.⁷⁰ In this position, the PPAG becomes the confession of faith, the tenets of the church, and the compass

⁵⁶ PPAG 1997, number 152-162.

⁵⁷ PPAG 1997, number 163-174.

⁵⁸ PPAG 1997, number 175-184.

⁵⁹ PPAG 1997, number 185-195.

⁶⁰ PPAG 1997, number 196-205.

⁶¹ PPAG 1997, number 206-216.

⁶² PPAG 1997, number 217-227.

⁶³ PPAG 1997, number 228-241.

⁶⁴ PPAG 1997, number 242-253.

⁶⁵ PPAG 1997, number 254-265.

⁶⁶ PPAG 1997, number 266-273.

⁶⁷ PPAG 1997, number 274-285.

⁶⁸ PPAG 1997, number 286-293.

⁶⁹ PPAG 1997, number 294-310.

⁷⁰ PPAG 2005, number 1.

of living out the missions of church. As the doctrine of GKJ, never shall the authority of the PPAG be equal to that of the Bible. Its formula can be changed and revised due to historical changes that should be regarded by the church. As it removes the theory of sacredness as the mode of existence dedicated to God, the sense of sacredness of the doctrine, as it is articulated by the 1997 edition, is also eliminated.

In chapter two, the 2005 PPAG articulates that the sixty-six books of the Bible are believed to be the Word of God, pointing to the divine revelation of the soteriological activity of God. In this position, the Bible has supreme authority to be the ultimate source of knowledge about the soteriological activity of God.⁷¹ The dialectical nuance between the word of human beings and of God, in the 1997 edition, has been removed due to the critics who suspected that the biblical faith, as expressed in the 1997 PPAG, regarded the Scriptures as substantially human words, even though through the Holy Spirit they received their function in the soteriological activity of God.⁷²

In chapter three, the 2005 PPAG explicated the theory about soteriological activity of God. The substance of the soteriological activity is reconciliation between humanity and divinity. From this spiritual reconciliation springs the fountain of harmony in the social and natural worlds.⁷³ The One God works out His plan of salvation in three events, namely, the salvation of Israel, the redemptive work of Christ, and the activity of the Holy Spirit. Likewise, these three events of salvation reveal to the church the existence of the Triune God who displays His divine activity in cooperation with the freedom of man. Although God can do everything, it is His will to do nothing that could eliminate the existence of human freedom.

God's soteriological activity must always be seen as an offer; it can be received or rejected by humans and never will God compel man to respond positively toward His soteriological activity. It reveals four spiritual matters: (a) it discloses the fact that what is natural is fundamentally good since it has come from God's will; (b) it discloses that the fact that sin defines human predicament which has come from the rebellion toward God's will; (c) it discloses the fact of human vanity that by one's own capacity no one would be able to save one's life; (d) it discloses the fact of divine salvation that anything good experienced by man has come from God who wants to save human beings.⁷⁴ These four spiritual matters become the grounds for human freedom facing God's soteriological activity. They are pointing to the natural, sinful, limited, and redemptive worlds of humanity, in which God's soteriological activity is performed at the historical stage of human beings surrounded by so much struggle, tragedy, hope, and fortune. In these worlds of humanity, every individual should use his/her freedom to respond God's offering of salvation of human life. While the negative response is called sin, the positive response to God's soteriological activity is called conversion. There are two kinds of conversion, namely, the fundamental conversion and the ongoing conversion. The first one is when an unbeliever becomes a believer. The latter is when a believer becomes more and more sanctified in his daily obedience to God, against the evil drives and forces in the real world, as his/her life becomes a spiritual journey of salvation.⁷⁵

In chapter four, the 2005 PPAG explicates the existence of the church as a community of believers. This community is based on God's soteriological activity, revealing the religious existence of humanity. Accordingly, the very nature of the church should be defined to be the

⁷¹PPAG 2005, number 18.

⁷²PPAG 2005, number 17.

⁷³PPAG 2005, number 20.

⁷⁴PPAG 2005, number 21.

⁷⁵PPAG 2005, number 59-68.

religious community of people who want to give positive response to God's soteriological activity. At the base, the phenomenology of the church is the community of believers living out their religious lives with their fellows, so that the fundamental definition of the church should be the religious communal life ("*kehidupan bersama religius*"). The dignity of the church stems from the nature of human beings, which always should be in relation to their Creator. Humanity has two natures at once; on the one hand, it has a divine nature anchored in God's soteriological activity; on the other hand, it has a human nature as it is the manifestation of religious communal life of the believers.⁷⁶ Those two natures make the church always framed by paradoxical characters; on the one hand, the church is in a full state of grace rooted in God's activity redeeming human weaknesses and imperfection; yet on the other hand, the church is tainted with human sinfulness creating defects and shortcomings.⁷⁷ In the full state of divine grace, there is only one church, which is the fruit of God's soteriological activity; yet, in the human state, there are many phenomena of the church struggling for ecumenical unity. In this situation, the church needs an ecclesiastical order, which on the one hand creates borderlines among churches, yet on the other hand facilitates managerial processes in the ecclesial life in order to communicate the soteriological activity of God in the human world. The ecclesial life of the church knows the offices of elders, deacons, and ministers of the Word. Their duty is to reflect a pastoral character for the sanctification of the church facilitated by the instruments of faith, namely, religious services and sacraments.⁷⁸

In chapter five, the 2005 PPAG clarifies the Christian life in the world. It takes account of discussions about the ethics of living in the world and unfolds the two fundamental ethical responsibilities towards natural and social orders.⁷⁹ Serious efforts of fulfilling these ethical responsibilities will be a sign of a cooperative attitude toward God's soteriological activity; it is a sign of a Christian life under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.⁸⁰ The ethics of living in the world consist of ethical attitudes toward the natural world, the cultural world, the growth of science and technology, the secularism, the state, the government, and the human religions. It is stated that the natural world has been created by God according to the order of creation in which human beings are placed by the divine ordinance to live in harmony with other creatures, and to cultivate the natural world so that it reveals the glory of God.⁸¹ Likewise, the ethics explain that the cultural world as well as the growth of science and technology are the result of man's capacity to construct various forms of the human world. It implies positive, critical, and evaluative attitudes toward the phenomena of cultural realities in order to improve their qualities and to reduce their mistaken behaviour.⁸²

Moreover, it is realized that the modern world is accompanied by secular attitudes and the danger of secularism. While it is important to have a positive attitude toward the secular realm, it is dangerous to put the secular order as the highest ethical principle without God. This is the phenomenon of secularism that might entail atheism if the existence of faith is removed from ethical considerations.⁸³ Then, the Christian attitude toward the state is discussed. The phenomenon of the state reveals the existence of power in the human social life framed by much paradox. On the one hand, the existence of a powerful state is needed by

⁷⁶PPAG 2005, number 76.

⁷⁷PPAG 2005, number 85.

⁷⁸PPAG 2005, number 116-138.

⁷⁹PPAG 2005, number 139-149.

⁸⁰PPAG 2005, number 144.

⁸¹PPAG 2005, number 150-158.

⁸²PPAG 2005, number 159-169.

⁸³PPAG 2005, number 170-201.

humanity. On the other hand, the realm of power of the state tends to restrict or even to eliminate the natural existence of human freedom, as the state has a legitimate authority to implement its realm by force. In this sense, regarding the existence of the state, the ethical principles that should be remembered by Christians are the principles of pluralism and of anti-totalitarianism. Similarly, as to the existence of a government or ruling party of the state that tends to claim supreme power over the people by identifying itself to be the normative ideology of the state, the ethical standards that should be kept in mind by Christians are the principles of respect, of a conditionally open attitude, and of a secular state. These principles point to the church's commitment to give proper respect to the government. This commitment is based on the open attitude to the normative claim of the government's authority, as long as it does not claim the religious realm of faith; its political norms should not be implemented in the religious realm of faith; and this would imply the existence of a secular state that is 'based upon the principle of a clear separation between state and religion' (PPAG 2005, number 200) and gives justice to the religious pluralism in the country. Eventually, regarding the existence of different religions in the society, it is stated that the church should show respect to the other religions, as human religiosity sprung from God's soteriological activity that should always be proclaimed in communicative attitudes.⁸⁴ The 2005 PPAG, however, has removed the statement of the 1997 edition about the right to convert into another religion.⁸⁵

In chapter six, the 2005 PPAG describes the four spiritual heritages of the church, namely, the Decalogue, the Golden Rules, the Apostles' Creed, and a prayer life inspired by the Lord's Prayer. In the first tablet of the Decalogue, it is stated that the believers should maintain their relationship to God who actively works out His plan of salvation. This should be done, on the one hand, by deconstructing all mediating symbols such as statues and images in order not to reduce the God of holiness into a temporal being; on the other hand, it should be done by maintaining a devotional attitude toward the sacred symbols in religion such as the divine name and the prayer time/day.⁸⁶ Equally, in the second tablet of the Decalogue, it is stated that the believers should actively involve themselves in the soteriological activity of God by honouring their parents, preserving the value of human life, sanctifying sexual behaviour, acknowledging each other's property, having a commitment to the truth, and controlling their inordinate desires.⁸⁷ Those two tablets of the Decalogue are formulated to be the Golden Rule of Christ, pointing to the active commitment to loving God and other fellow humans.⁸⁸ Then, regarding the Apostles' Creed, it is stated that the GKJ maintains her commitment to the ancient creed; however, she also claims her right to have a new interpretation in order that, in her living context, she may articulate consistently her confession of faith according to principles of the Bible.⁸⁹ Finally, regarding the prayer life, it is stated that the bottom line of Christian prayer is a state of human life being involved in God's soteriological activity. In prayer, the believer entrusts his humanity to the wisdom of the loving God; and that is why every prayer should be ended by the word amen, expressing confidence that man's existence is framed by the divine salvation.⁹⁰ At the very end of the 2005 PPAG, again there is a formula of commitment that should be signed by the church leaders. The formula is the same as the one in the 1997 edition.

⁸⁴PPAG 2005, number 202-216.

⁸⁵ PPAG 1997, number 263.

⁸⁶PPAG 2005, number 217-224.

⁸⁷PPAG 2005, number 225-230.

⁸⁸PPAG 2005, number 231-238.

⁸⁹PPAG 2005, number 239-246.

⁹⁰PPAG 2005, number 247-259.

For the most part, the 2005 PPAG has preserved the thesis of the 1997 edition. The major revisions deal only with technical improvements of sentences. However, there are some indications that the revision has reduced the radical character of the 1997 PPAG. Firstly, regarding the dignity of the Bible, in the original edition it is stated that the Bible is the Word of God in the sense that it is a set of literature functioning in God's soteriological activity.⁹¹ This statement has been removed in the 2005 edition. The weight of the statement has to do with the temporal state of the sacred Scriptures; the Bible comes from humans and was later on regarded to be the work of the divinity; the human work has a particular place in the divine activity of salvation. The sacredness of the Scriptures comes from above by the activity of the Holy Spirit, but its origin is from below by the activity of man. Therefore, the 1997 edition states blatantly that the writers of the Bible are humans.⁹² This patently obvious statement has been removed in the 2005 edition.

Secondly, regarding the dignity of the doctrine, the 1997 edition states that the doctrine may be regarded to be sacred, as it is the human work being offered to God.⁹³ The wretched condition of the human work does not hinder the activity of the Holy Spirit transforming the human imperfection to be the divine sacred presence operating God's soteriological activity. The most important point here is that, before the divine activity, the human beings should cultivate their freedom to have a responsible faith towards actual challenges in their life. This statement and the theory of sacredness are removed in the 2005 edition.

Besides reducing its radical intention on the human authority and responsibility, the 2005 edition improves several perspectives of the original text. Regarding the origin of the Protestant canon, the 2005 edition has carefully made a correction concerning a mistaken opinion of the original text. In the 1997 edition, regarding the origin of the Protestant canon, it was stated that the sixty-six books of the Bible have been accepted by the church without any ecumenical council; and this is regarded by the GKJ to be the fruit of divine protection and the activity of the Holy Spirit. This is a naive statement; but it provides a significant proof that most of GKJ's theologians do not have proper knowledge about the Belgic confession, which has been accepted by the *Gereformeerde* tradition to be one of the three formulas of unity. This would indicate that the process of the creation of the *Gereformeerde* Javanese church has been incomplete. The process is held down by the fact that the GKJ only recognizes the Heidelberg Catechism as an important heritage of the Reformation that should be temporarily accepted as the church's confession; but, never do they have a proper understanding about the confessional moments that had created the Reformed tradition.

Then, regarding the existence of political power, for the most part the 2005 edition preserved the original principles of the 1997 PPAG. It states that on the one hand, the power of the state is necessary for the existence of humanity; but, on the other hand, the power of the state is always in danger of being corrupted because of the fallen existence of human nature. For this reason, the church believes that the power of the state should be placed on the institution of the government and not on the personal existence of a ruler. Therefore, the 2005 PPAG adds six principles of Christian ethics toward the state, namely, (1) that the power of the state should be critically monitored, (2) that the state should be ruled by the supremacy of the law, (3) that the state should be the servant of humanity, (4) that the state should provide well being to its people, (5) that the state should regard the dignity of human beings; and (6) that

⁹¹ PPAG 1997, number 13.

⁹² PPAG 1997, number 17.

⁹³ PPAG 1997, number 8.

the state should respectfully defend the human rights.⁹⁴ After the fall of Soeharto, May 21 1998 and the following decade of *reformasi* (a time of political openness) those principles could be phrased more explicitly. Again, we find here ideas expressed by Brotosemedi earlier.

As a conclusion, it can be said that the revision reflects the cultivation of what was formerly a text framed by a personal nuance of Brotosemedi into a more refined text representing the spirituality of the GKJ.

Theological Analysis

Regarding its position as the confession of the GKJ, which stems from the Reformed tradition, there are at least five theological issues in the PPAG, that should be analyzed. The five issues include the doctrine of the Trinity, of the church, of the sacrament, of the ministry and finally, the Christian life.

The first issue is its theological opinion about the Trinity. The PPAG states firmly that the Trinity is one God with one divine personality “*Bapa, Anak, dan Roh Kudus itu Allah yang satu dan sama. Jadi, pribadinya hanya satu, yaitu Allah*” (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one and the same. Therefore, there is only one person, that is, God).⁹⁵ What is revealed in the Triune God is not the three divine personalities, but the one God being active in His soteriological activity, which is perceived by the human beings to be the three events of salvation. In these events of salvation, the Bible illustrates the God of Israel to be the Father, the God in Christ to be the Son, and the God providing divine activity of salvation to be the Holy Spirit. When Christ prayed to the Father, as illustrated in the Bible, it was not a communication between two divine beings, but it was a communication between God and a human person, as in Christ, God was incarnated to be truly human. Similarly, when the Bible illustrates God sending the Holy Spirit upon the first Christian people, this indicates that God is continuing His soteriological activity among the human beings. For the GKJ, living in a society with an Islamic majority, this kind of theology would be of much help to develop communication with the Muslims. However, at the same time this could increase the gap between the GKJ and the ancient church. The theory of hypostasis, revealing the one God in an eternal inter-relationship between three divine personalities, would be more and more forgotten. As a result, the GKJ would be in a danger of becoming a new sect of Christianity.

Brotosemedi's background, as a person who once studied psychology within the faculty of literature, pedagogy and philosophy of the state University Gadjah Mada in Yogyakarta, may probably inform us about the background of this position. Among psychologists, the phenomenon of split personality indicates a mental problem. A healthy person has a mental integrity, which enables him/her to maintain a holistic personality. If there is a person with many personalities, that person would experience a schizophrenic mental problem which separates him/her from the living reality. Moreover, Brotosemedi probably recognized the standard book on dogmatism during his theological education, *Dogmatika Masakini*, which states that the doctrine of Trinity illustrates the existence of one God in the '*tiga cara berada*', that is, three modes of existing in historical humanity (Niftrik and Boland 1958, 560). It

⁹⁴PPAG 2005, number 187.

⁹⁵PPAG 1997, number 55; 2005, number 44.

seems that Brotosemedi has developed this kind of theological argument into his theory about the three modes of the three events of salvation manifesting God's soteriological activity.⁹⁶

Nevertheless, Brotosemedi cannot solve the problem of God having a split personality in systematic theology and in personal prayer. If the Triune God is about the three modes of existing in the three events of salvation, what kind of God do the Christians meet in their prayer? Is it a personal God (Father) or an impersonal deity? As the 2005 edition⁹⁷ preserves the statement of the 1997 edition,⁹⁸ regarding the difference between God in the doctrinal thinking and God in the prayer life, the PPAG reserves this theological problem for the future debates.

Secondly, in the PPAG, the doctrine of the church is articulated in a simple statement: "The church is the *kehidupan bersama religius*, religious communal life."⁹⁹ The 2005 edition adds a point: "the church is a religious communal life which is centered in Jesus Christ. It is at the same time a fruit of God's salvific work and the human answer to salvation by God, in which the Holy Spirit works in the framework of God's salvific work". So, it is a community of believers who experiences God's soteriological activity. The PPAG uses the word 'religious' (*religius*) to point out the positive human attitude toward God's soteriological activity.¹⁰⁰ This idea has nothing to do with the idea of religious life in the Catholic tradition, pointing to people who leave the secular life behind in order to dedicate themselves fully to monastic life. For the PPAG, being religious means to be in a mutual relationship with God; it is having a positive attitude toward God's soteriological activity. Accordingly, the meaning of religious life is a living dedication to God's pursuits of salvation to be religious one should be a soteriological person; and the church is a soteriological community so to speak.

At first glance, the PPAG's definition of the church does not have any connection with the Reformed tradition. It does not say anything about the three dignities of Christ being transformed into the three offices of the church, as the Kingdom of Christ is reflected in the existence of the church, as has been assumed by the ancient ecclesiology. It maintains the three offices of the church, namely, the elders, the deacons, and the ministers of the Word but it does not mention anything related to the three dignities of Christ, viz. king, priest, and prophet.¹⁰¹ By doing so, it seems that the PPAG indicates that the GKJ is searching for a new way of justification for its ecclesiology. The source of justification for ecclesiology is not the Reformed tradition, which was adopted by the mother church in the Netherlands. The source of justification for its ecclesiology should be found in the GKJ's authentic existence in God's soteriological activity in Indonesia. Accordingly, the key point for the GKJ's ecclesiology should not be the Reformed traditional ecclesiology or Calvinism but simply the idea of being religious which means being in mutual relationship with God.

Thirdly, there are two definitions of the sacrament in the PPAG. The 1997 edition defines that sacrament is something sanctified to God.¹⁰² It uses the Javanese word *sinengker* (being separated for religious purpose) to define the meaning of the concept. The 2005 edition reduces the definition as it defines that sacrament is a special ministerial instrument in the soteriological activity of God: "*Sakramen adalah alat pelayanan yang dikhususkan didalam*

⁹⁶PPAG 1997, 39; 2005, 33.

⁹⁷PPAG 1997, 56.

⁹⁸PPAG 2005, 46.

⁹⁹ PPAG 1997, number 80; 2005, number 75.

¹⁰⁰ PPAG 1997, number 79; 2005, number 69.

¹⁰¹PPAG 1997, number 125; 2005 number 115.

¹⁰² PPAG 1997, number 139.

pekerjaan penyelamatan Allah, yaitu sebagai pernyataan dan pemeliharaan iman”.¹⁰³ It has not described what makes the sacrament special because, probably, the new edition only wants to simplify a strong Javanese word *sinengker* (sanctified). It indicates that the idea of sacrament has more and more lost its sense of mystery, as the belief of the ancient Christian tradition which saw it to be the instrument of the incarnated God being present in the human world. While the 1997 edition is framed by the theory of holiness as a dialectic movement between God and human beings in which man offers an intentional matter to God and the Holy Spirit sanctifies it to be a divine instrument of salvation, the 2005 edition's definition of the sacrament stands only on a technical ground and is losing the sacred dimension of the ritual of the incarnation.

Furthermore, the 1997 edition of the PPAG articulates lively the relationship between the sacrament and Christ's redemptive sacrifice. It seems that the author of the 1997 edition had a personal devotion to the blood of Christ reflecting His commitment to God's soteriological activity. As to the description of baptism, it describes that the water symbolizes the blood of Christ that cleanses human sin and provides the justification of God; while in the description of the Eucharist, it describes that bread and wine symbolize the body and blood of the Saviour, as they point to the past, present, and future events of salvation simultaneously. If we consider Brotosemedi's life, in his dedication to his ministerial office, it seems that his personal devotion to the blood of Christ—or to the commitment of the Saviour to God's soteriological activity toward humanity—has become the background and the content of the 1997 edition's sacramentology. On the one hand, the 1997 PPAG articulated a Calvinistic Reformed doctrine of sacrament, assuming it to be a merely theological symbol used as the instrument of faith, but on the other hand it gives an existential content to the symbolical elements of the sacrament. These symbols are the vehicle of our union with Christ both in the ritual and in the real life dedicated to the active struggle for soteriological action.

The revised 2005 edition, however, seems to reduce this personal-existential element. While the 1997 PPAG teaches that the sacrament, especially the Lord's Supper, should be received with a *censura morum*, namely the examination of consciousness or moral evaluation,¹⁰⁴ the 2005 edition has removed the idea of self-examination before receiving the sacrament. In this sense, the 2005 PPAG seems to move a step further in separating itself from the Reformed tradition. Nevertheless, as Brotosemedi has been regarded as a *pandhita sajati* (i.e. a truly dedicated minister of the Word) by the members of the PPAG's revising team, another possibility should be considered. The team may have realized that the tradition of *censura morum* is inapplicable in many urban congregations of the GKJ, where people do not have so much time to make self examination before their fellow Christians or church officials, and where the *censura morum* has become more and more a personal piety toward the sacrament, especially the Lord's Supper. While the 1997 edition, with Brotosemedi as its author, has been influenced by the rural context of GKJ, the 2005 PPAG gives room for the urban context of the denomination. By this approach, the GKJ becomes more and more open to many differences in the Javanese Christians congregations.

Fourthly, in the PPAG, the idea of ministry is articulated by the words of *kepemimpinan gereja* (church leadership). The idea is connected with the ecclesiological principle of the PPAG that the church is a *kehidupan bersama religius* (communal religious life); the church is a community of people who respond positively to God's soteriological activity. But, what does soteriological activity mean? It means an active engagement in the human crisis in its

¹⁰³PPAG 2005, number 128.

¹⁰⁴ PPAG 1997, number 150.

many forms. This entails attitudes of being concerned with the actual problems faced by human beings, and this implies a way of thinking that gives much attention to the visible reality. In the doctrinal discourse, this active engagement to the soteriological activity of God would need to be concerned about the phenomenological approaches. In this train of thought, the PPAG assumes that the best way to have knowledge about God is by recognizing His divine activity in the human world, and not by defining His substance of divinity. Being applied to ecclesiology, the assumption entails an argument that the church cannot be defined properly without seeing its phenomenon as a community of people engaged in God's soteriological activity. Assuming that the soteriological people are religious individuals, then the church is defined to be a *kehidupan bersama religius* (communal religious life). The question subsequently is how the church should be organized? What kind of leadership would be fit for that kind of community?

As an heir of the Reformed tradition, the PPAG assumes the universal priesthood of all believers,¹⁰⁵ and it states that the ecclesiastical leadership should be distributed equally among the church members.¹⁰⁶ This principle implies democracy in the church, so that the ecclesiastical leadership should be based on election by the church members.¹⁰⁷ The base for this process is the existence of the local church. The universal priesthood of believers exists in the local church that manifests religious people engaging the soteriological activity of God. Every believer should use his/her personal freedom to actualize their priesthood before the Kingdom of God that has soteriological character among human beings.

So then, as the GKJ holds the Apostles' Creed regarding the catholicity of the church, how should the unity among churches be approached? The PPAG points out that the catholicity of the church does not lie in the realm of humanity; it lies in the realm of God's soteriological activity. The believers should struggle for the unity of the church as God continuously makes efforts to have it in the world. In this sense, the catholicity of the church can only be formulated in a negative imperative, such as: do not create any kind of schism in the church. On the contrary, the believers should continuously make great efforts to have a real relationship with the churches in the world, by admitting their sinfulness yet acknowledging their dignity as the fruit of God's works of salvation.¹⁰⁸

The last issue, as to the theology of the PPAG, is the doctrine of Christian life. The presumption for this doctrine is that God is working out his divine salvation toward human beings. This divine undertaking is the basis for the human rational understanding about God. It is impossible for the human beings to have any knowledge about the very essence of God, but it is possible for them to see a particular divine revelation based on God's activity to generate human salvation in the world. This divine activity is manifested in Christ's redemptive work, which becomes the very substance of human salvation. Through Christ, a new humanity has been generated, living in obedience to God; and this creates, between God and human beings, a mutual relationship which is called salvation.

Based on the above precept, the original version of the PPAG (1997) arranges its materials. It starts not from the definition of God and the divine faculties, but from the pragmatic position of theological enterprise about the knowledge of God and of human beings. The pragmatic position is the "teaching of the church" (i.e. the theological doctrine). From this position, any

¹⁰⁵ PPAG 1997, number 121; 2005, number 111.

¹⁰⁶ PPAG 1997, number 122; 2005, number 112.

¹⁰⁷ PPAG 1997, number 123; 2005, number 113.

¹⁰⁸ PPAG 1997, number 109; 2005, number 99.

theological argument about God should be enveloped by humility; it cannot claim to be a heavenly theological knowledge but a human reflection about fragmented revelatory information in the world. From this position, a humble believer will be able to develop theological argument about the Bible, the human salvation, the Trinity, the church, the Decalogue, the Apostles' creed, prayer, and man's attitude toward the world. Those are aspects of human salvation, which is the core of any justified theological argument. Any kind of theology that does not promote human salvation will lead to false conclusions. Theology is substantially soteriological, so to speak.

In the above soteriology, the starting point is always God. It is God who starts the soteriological undertaking for human salvation. In this case, the human life is an ongoing stage where God presents the soteriological effort. On that stage, God presents His divine enterprise that calls the human beings to give a proper answer freely. This is the source of thankfulness, human freedom and responsibility. Human beings are always free to choose whether they will accept or reject the salvation offered by God. If they accept it, they will experience an authentic freedom, as they will be in mutual relationship with their Creator. But, if they reject it, they will experience a corrupt freedom that will place them in a state of hostility to God. Therefore, the most crucial moment of human salvation is about their usage of freedom, as they can use it to obey or to rebel against God.

There is no guarantee in the world that human beings are able to use their freedom according to the will of God. This is the fragile condition of human salvation, and there is no one who can protect them against any damage or sin, except God Himself. This is a paradoxical situation. On the one hand, the human freedom is very open according to one's own deliberation; on the other hand, freedom never exists if one is not in a mutual relationship to God. What is revealed here is that there is a theological imperative regarding human freedom, pointing to a pious submission to God. It is true that the human beings are totally free, but their freedom will lead to a tragedy of sin if they do not submit themselves under God's authority. This paradox is the source of piety in Christian life. The PPAG promotes a responsible freedom, which is based on a sense of subtle piety beneath the human rational endeavor.

From this position, the PPAG argues about the human thankfulness and responsibility toward all aspects of life. By such a form of responsibility, they secure their freedom before the eyes of God. However, that does not mean that there is a secure theological position about what "the eyes of God" is meaning. It does not mean to be a religion, including the Christian religion which is always a theological system created by human endeavor. The "eyes of God" means transcendence, while the system of religion is always immanent in the fallen world. Therefore, to secure the human freedom before the eyes of God will point to the fact that it is always a calling of piety but not of religious loyalty. One should always be in the struggle of discernment about the will of God. In the words of the PPAG, this discernment is called as the ethical life of a believer (PPAG 1997, number 172-174). In this sense, the PPAG pronounces religious freedom, including the freedom of converting to other religions, which are not Christian (PPAG 1997, number 263).

Conclusion of the Chapter

At the end of this chapter, we can conclude that the history of GKJ reveals a profile of Reformed spirituality that is eager to express and confess its faith on the indigenous soil of

Javanese people. It begins with Adriaanse's effort to institutionalize the Javanese church, reflecting the missionary's awareness about the need of a legitimate ecclesiastical vehicle for the Javanese Christians to live their faith in the Javanese context. Because of the lack of indigenous leaders, it needed three decades before the effort could create the first synod of the GKJ. In this synod, the Reformed Javanese Christians revealed their yearning for an authentic confession of faith and by this statement it revealed its commitment to let their faith be a significant answer to the questions coming from the society. In several historical periods, this commitment was put to trial and experienced difficult situations. Sometimes, it was revealed in a way showing respect to the government; yet at other times it was revealed the other way around, and the story of the PPAG reveals both the critical approach to the government and the mainstream ideas of Western Christianity. The first edition of the PPAG reveals a critical position to the great narratives of Christianity, while the revised one reveals a more sympathetic approach to the mainline Christian tradition. *In this story, it is revealed that the Reformed spirituality has been evolving dramatically in Java. It has been on a journey of evolution from a colonized mentality to an ethos of thankfulness and responsibility:* from the era of Dutch colonialism into independent local churches in the new republic of Indonesia. In this process of growth, the GKJ has learned how to be a true confessing church in a Reformed tradition. As an icon of this process, the PPAG or the new catechism of the GKJ is an entrance to reveal the many stories of that journey of faith.

Chapter 5

General Conclusion

Let me begin this conclusion by explaining why—rather unusually—I did start this thesis with three brief statements or motto's. Together they form an expression of my intentions and theological position. I assume, the first and the third of these statements are clear. *Ecclesia reformata semper reformanda*. This is the situation we experience in Indonesia and in many other non-Western countries. Our historical, cultural and religious context makes it necessary to accept this constant need of reformation. Likewise, *manungsa kurang tata iku dumadine buta* seems clear. Both a society and churches need some order lest they fall into chaos. The PPAG, with its spiritual foundation, provides such a contextual order to the GKJ.

Maybe the second motto—my personal reflection—requires a brief clarification. 'The historical past is of importance, yet the future is imperative and the present moment is of significance. They are the breath of our spirituality, following the journey of the incarnated Christ in the world.' By these words I want to connect three things: 'the factual', that is, indicatively, the historical facts; secondly that which is my 'dream', the future in my heart, the joy and the insistence of the calling of my soul (as an imperative) and thirdly, 'the real,' that is, the present time which is significant. Within the Christian faith, together they incarnate the 'existential movement' of following Christ in the world; the divine incarnates and becomes a human reality. I experience this threefold dynamics within the minds and hearts of the people I discussed. This starts with Calvin (and other reformers), then with the missionaries who came to Java and also the Javanese Christians who subsequently got involved in the efforts to establish an indigenous church (like Sadrach did). Finally, I see that this dynamics did inspire ethical-political movements and the new generation of Soekarno and his friends which originated from these movements. From a Christian perspective, I read them as God's effort to make his Kingdom present in Indonesia, in spite of several paradoxes and historical tragedies. Through this threefold dynamics I have become more cautious in evaluating the persons I discussed above.

In this dissertation, we have discussed two research questions regarding what one might call Reformed spirituality, its characteristics, and its relatively recent, historical existence in the context of Java. The word 'spirituality' as a keyword for the efforts of the Protestant Reformers in reforming the church is difficult to find. In the sixteenth century, the word 'spirituality' had a different meaning from the idea of spirituality in the twenty-first century. At that time, the word spirituality pointed to any property of the church both spiritual and physical/temporal. The Protestant Reformers, especially John Calvin, tried to find other ways to discuss the very message of the Christian Gospel behind any official theological statement of the Roman papism. They pronounced it to be the Word of God, which should be solemnly approached. In his *Institutes*, Calvin pronounced the solemn attitude of faith toward the Word of God as the act of piety. By using this word, Calvin tried to express the idea of spirituality with the word piety. But, what does piety or spirituality mean?

By tracing Calvin's life and work, we can say that piety or spirituality means a dedicated life, a serious commitment, and a solemn, living faith under the commandments of God. These commandments are not only understood as a set of religious norms but as an inner calling grounded in historical experiences that challenge the Christian life and faith. By hearing the inner calling, people find their authentic individuality—their existence—, which can never be separated from God. In Western society, especially in the Netherlands, this phenomenon has

shaped a new civilization minimalizing the power of monarchy and creating an order of individual freedom and civil society. Therefore, in their context, the Reformed Christians in the Netherlands have been defining themselves to be people that have been Reformed in the true church order and ecclesial teaching, by the Word of God, and not by the word of man. For this reason, the idea of spirituality has found its particular shape in the phenomenon of the Reformed churches, which are characterized by pluralism, but which yet are united by the three legacies of Calvinism: the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canon of Dort. Accordingly, the Reformed spirituality has been expressed in faithful commitment to the Calvinist tradition shaped by those three uniting documents.

However, considering modern studies on spirituality, we can see that there are many definitions of spirituality. Spirituality can also be described as faith being lived; and this faith can be pronounced in many theological languages and traditions. The phenomenon of Reformed spirituality is only a piece of a mosaic representing greater phenomena of human faith and religiosity. The idea of spirituality is not only a set of doctrines or religious practices, but also a dynamic of hermeneutical approaches toward the phenomena of human faith and religiosity.

The specific character of Reformed spirituality is its hermeneutics of divine grace. Its idea of thankfulness and responsibility can be interpreted as a human response to this divine grace. Hence, Reformed spirituality can also be described as a hermeneutics of thankfulness and responsibility. In the depth of its nature, this grace is unsurpassable by human work and is always the initiator of human salvation. However, on the surface of the phenomenal world, this grace always dwells in the environment of human faith. It reveals the existence of the church facilitating the communion between God and His people. It reveals the existence of the religious media becoming the vehicle of divine presence in the human world; that is the existence of the sacraments of the church. It reveals the existence of the religious agents being consecrated by the church for special functions; that is the existence of the ministers. And, it reveals the existence of human persons who answer the Word of God, which they hear authentically in their individual-personal life; that is the praxis of piety or Christian life. In chapter two, we argue that the nature of Reformed spirituality could be approached by hermeneutics toward those four aspects of Christian life.

However, when the Reformed faith came to Java, such a nature of spirituality did not automatically become an effective vehicle of the divine grace to the indigenous people. Although the divine grace is always unsurpassable compared with the human work, the gap between Western Christian civilization and the Javanese local culture was huge. The Reformed spirituality did not automatically bring communicative ministers and teachers to the Javanese people. Instead, in the case of Sadrach, it became evident that colonialism had dominated the mind of some Dutch leaders coming from the Reformed tradition. Fortunately, there were also Dutch leaders and ministers who developed an emancipative approach and attitude toward the Javanese people who started to become Christians. Through these people, we can see a variety of Reformed spirituality that always was intertwined with philosophy and interest for the world.

In the case of Javanese Christians, the existence of the GKJ continues to be the story of Reformed spirituality in Java. In Western Europe, the Reformed tradition was shaped by the birth of individuality and human rights, so that the particular characteristics of the Reformed spirituality was colored by its commitment to present an individual confession of faith in public life. *In Java, the story of Reformed spirituality has followed a different path.* It was shaped by the Javanese culture and the birth of the Indonesian republic. It was shaped by the

gradual effort to educate Javanese theologians and ministers alongside with the political evolution in the new republic. Several Javanese figures—such as Samidjo Wirjotenojo, Probowinoto, Soedarmo, Harun Hadiwijono, and Brotosemedi Wiryotenojo—can be named here as the icons of Reformed spirituality, which has so many different characters. Their life reveals a particular Javanese expression of Reformed spirituality.

Among them, Brotosemedi receives a prominent place in this dissertation as he was the architect of the new catechism of the GKJ (PPAG). The new catechism was intended to be the confession of faith of this denomination. It is clearly an important contextual document. Though not expressed openly in the text or preface of the document, implicitly the political situation around 1981—when the 16th Synod meeting of the GKJ was held which was the starting point of the process leading to the PPAG—was one of the factors which challenged the Christians of the GKJ to express their *status confessionis* toward the evil situation in that period of the history of the GKJ. And, together with his work, the personal life of Brotosemedi—which reveals the Christian commitment to the Word of God in front of a powerful regime—has become of great importance to be a model of Reformed spirituality among the leaders, ministers, and theologians of the GKJ. This dissertation uses this phenomenon as an icon of Reformed spirituality that becomes the model of the modern GKJ at the end of the twentieth century.

Later on, critical questions were raised regarding the future of the story about Reformed spirituality in Java. Is Brotosemedi, who has become an example of Reformed spirituality in Java, the end or the beginning of the story about Reformed faith in the challenging situation of Indonesia's political life? Is the PPAG, which somehow creates a breach with the mainline dogmatic language of the Reformed tradition, the final constitution of faith of the GKJ or just a provisional laboratory of contextual theology in Java? Whereas the PPAG in 2005 still anticipated a secular way of life instead the choice for religious fundamentalism, what should be formulated in a future situation? Again anew catechism for Christians who nowadays seem to live in an alien world at the beginning of the twenty-first century? May these questions open the way for future research in the study of Christian spirituality in Java.

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Summary

When he wrote the first edition of his *Institutes* in 1536, Calvin used a sub-title indicating his serious intention that his work would not only be a purely academic endeavor but was meant also as a significant advocacy of Christians during the perilous times of the first half of the sixteenth-century. For this purpose he added to the main title of the *Institutes* information, explaining that his work was “embracing almost the whole sum of piety ...” (Calvin 1536). The information signifies that Calvin’s work does not only contain theological statements but is also a narrative of religious experience which might be called spirituality today. Calvin’s work, however, is not a manual about spiritual exercises or a set of regulations about a particular kind of spiritual tradition. It is a theological work with a great impact, which stimulates many kinds of spirituality that could be described using several terminologies such as Calvinian or Calvinistic spirituality.

This dissertation is dedicated to studying that kind of spirituality. Since Calvinistic theology is commonly said to be Reformed theology, here Calvinistic spirituality is mentioned under the name of Reformed spirituality. This dissertation is a study about Reformed spirituality as originated in a particular place in Indonesia, namely, in Central Java. It resulted in becoming a modern denomination called the GKJ (*Gereja-gereja Kristen Jawa*, the Javanese Christian Churches, or the Christian Churches of Java). In doing so, this dissertation moves in four steps. Firstly, it tries to define the meaning of Reformed spirituality. Secondly, it tries to characterize theological themes representing the idea of Reformed spirituality. Thirdly, it tries to describe the historical background of the GKJ rooted in the nineteenth-century evangelism of Java. Fourthly, it tries to evaluate the qualities of Reformed spirituality in the present GKJ by tracing its struggle to have its own indigenous confession, called the PPAG (*Pokok-pokok Ajaran Gereja*, the main principles of doctrine), that is meant to be the official ecclesiastical teaching of this church.

The first step is comprised in Chapter One. In this chapter the Reformed spirituality is defined to be what Sandra Schneiders called ‘faith that becomes lived experience’ (Schneiders 1989, 679), or faith being lived in daily life. It is a spirituality which has become the lived experience of the people of Reformation. Substantially, it has its validity within the whole body of the Reformation such as the Lutherans, the Calvinists, the Anglicans, and the Anabaptists (both the radical wing and the moderates). Particularly, however, for the purpose of clarity here, it points to the lived experience of a particular group of people, namely, the Calvinists in the Netherlands embodying what is called *de Gereformeerde Kerk* or the Reformed Church. Here, the idea of Reformed spirituality becomes specific: it is the Reformed faith experienced vividly in daily life both personally and socially. This kind of spirituality has become a part of the Dutch history.

The second step is comprised in Chapter Two. In this chapter the Reformed spirituality is characterized by four theological themes: ecclesiology, sacramentology, theology of ministry, and the idea of piety. These four theological themes are chosen to be the terms representing the theological discourse about how God in human institutions is experienced in the real world (ecclesiology); how the transcendence is experienced in the fragmented realities of human life (sacramentology); how the Holy One is experienced in the finite-historical realm of concrete human acts (ministry); and how the visible human effort to believe is located in the invisible grace of God (piety). My hypothesis is that Reformed spirituality is vividly

experienced in those four realms of theology. It is experienced in the church, which is both universal and particular simultaneously; it is experienced in the proper administration of the sacraments and it is experienced in the presence of legitimate ministry. Finally, it is experienced in the daily life fueled by authentic piety.

The third step is dealt with in Chapter Three. *In this chapter the Reformed spirituality is described as the inner background of the Dutch mission in Java.* This kind of spirituality is assumed to be the intrinsic motivation of the historical figures of this mission. What stimulates the discussion here is the fact that most of these historical figures—especially the native ones—belonged to a world which differed from the one of the sixteenth-century Reformation. While the sixteenth-century Reformation in Europe was characterized by people making public confessions to defend their consciousness before the state, the nineteenth-century mission in Java was characterized by several native believers who struggled for their Christian authenticity within the realm of their own cultural religiosity. Sometimes this struggle was accompanied with tensions or even conflicts between the native-Javanese Christians—such as Sadrach who, despite not having had a Western education, were proud of their Javanese culture and perceived reality in their traditional way of thinking—and the Dutch agents of mission such as Bieger who saw the native people as the subordinated, lower part of the colonial society. Nobody was able to resolve this discrepancy but the course of history itself, which eventually granted independence both to Indonesia as a nation and to the native Javanese churches, offered more or less its own solution. The Javanese Church in Central Java became a denominational reality by the name of the GKJ as mentioned above.

The fourth step is comprised in Chapter Four. *In this chapter the Reformed spirituality is narrated to be the actual spirituality of the GKJ at the time following Indonesian independence.* In the newly born Indonesian republic, the Reformed Javanese Church which previously was led by Dutch missionaries had to learn to sustain its existence by using its own resources. Likewise, the GKJ has been trying to articulate its Reformed spirituality according to her historical context. Firstly, during the war of independence, the GKJ tried to express a genuine nationalism by which the western Reformed spirituality was transformed into a spirituality fitting Indonesian nationalism. Secondly, during the era of the first Indonesian president Sukarno, the GKJ tried to maintain its relationship both with the sister-churches in the Netherlands and with the Indonesian government. Thirdly, during the era of Soeharto's administration, which was very authoritarian, the GKJ attempted to maintain its prophetic voice without being crushed by the regime. In this period, it formulated a new catechism which is now called the PPAG (Pokok-pokok Ajaran Gereja, the main principles of doctrine). To be specific, this effort has been embodied in one person who can be called the architect of the PPAG: Reverend Brotosemedi Wirjotenojo. This research believes that through his life and work, in which Javanese religiosity and Reformed tradition were melted together, we can see the existence of the Reformed spirituality in Java effectively performed in the history of this denomination.

As a conclusion, *as spirituality is understood to be faith manifested into lived experience, we may say that the existence of Reformed spirituality in Java is always manifested by historical phenomena.* It can be persons, movements, or organizations. In Java, the Reformed spirituality has existed in different kind of figures, movements, and organizations, which were characterized differently from the ones in the Western world. In Java, Reformed spirituality took shape within an assimilated culture produced by the historical encounter between the Eastern and Western world. As this kind of spirituality recognizes the local church as the concrete manifestation of the Kingdom of Christ, the Reformed spirituality in Java will continually struggle to search the face of God in concrete historical figures, movements, and

church organizations. This situation means a perpetual task of meaningful assimilation, by which the Christian tradition is maintained properly and the process of doing contextual theology is performed significantly. The Reformed spirituality in Java, therefore, is always in the process of an ongoing development of performing the true church of Christ among the Javanese people in Indonesia.

Ringkasan

Ketika menulis edisi pertama dari *Institutes*, di tahun 1536, Calvin mencantumkan sebuah subjudul yang menunjukkan maksud utamanya ia menulis buku tersebut; yaitu, bahwa kitab tersebut dimaksudkannya tidak hanya menjadi sekedar karya akademik tetapi juga menjadi suatu pembelaan yang kuat atas orang-orang Kristen pada waktu itu yang sedang mengalami banyak penganiayaan. Untuk maksud inilah maka ia mencantumkan subjudul yang berkata bahwa buku tersebut merupakan suatu “rangkuman atas seluruh kesalehan” (Calvin 1536). Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa karya Calvin bukanlah melulu sederetan kalimat teologis tetapi merupakan suatu proses naratif atas pengalaman religius yang pada masa kini disebut sebagai spiritualitas. Ini tidak berarti bahwa karya Calvin adalah suatu buku pedoman tentang latihan rohani atau pun suatu buku peraturan yang membentuk sebuah tradisi spiritual. Namun itu berarti bahwa karya Calvin merupakan sebuah usaha teologis yang berdampak besar, yang menggerakkan berbagai jenis spiritualitas yang pada akhirnya dapat mengklaim diri sebagai spiritualitas Calvinian atau spiritualitas Calvinis.

Disertasi ini dibuat dengan maksud untuk mempelajari spiritualitas macam itu. Karena teologi Calvin biasanya disebut dengan nama teologi Reform, maka corak spiritualitas yang sifatnya Calvinis kiranya dapat disebut dengan nama spiritualitas Reform. Disertasi ini adalah suatu studi terhadap spiritualitas Reform yang tumbuh di Jawa Tengah, Indonesia, dalam wujud suatu denominasi gerejawi yang disebut GKJ (Gereja-gereja Kristen Jawa). Tahapan kajiannya dilakukan dalam empat langkah. Pertama, disertasi ini berusaha mendefinisikan makna dari spiritualitas Reform. Kedua, disertasi ini mencoba melukiskan tema-tema besar dari spiritualitas Reform. Ketiga, disertasi ini berusaha melukiskan pertumbuhan spiritualitas Reform tersebut di Jawa pada abad kesembilan belas, ketika usaha pekabaran Injil atas orang-orang Jawa mulai dilakukan di Jawa Tengah dan pada akhirnya menjadi latar belakang historis dari keberadaan GKJ. Keempat, disertasi ini berusaha untuk mengevaluasi watak dari spiritualitas Reform yang telah melatar-belakangi GKJ tersebut dengan cara memperhatikan usaha denominasi tersebut melahirkan pengakuan imannya sendiri yang kemudian disebut sebagai PPAG (Pokok-pokok Ajaran Gereja).

Langkah pertama itu dikerjakan dalam Bab Satu. Di sini spiritualitas Reform didefinisikan sebagai—apa yang disebut oleh Sandra Schneiders—iman yang menjadi pengalaman-terhayati (Schneiders 1989, 679), atau iman yang dihidupi sehari-hari. Dibayangkan di sini, bahwa spiritualitas dalam arti macam itulah yang menjadi pengalaman-terhayati oleh orang-orang pada zaman Reformasi. Patut diakui di sini, bahwa, secara substansial, spiritualitas sebagai pengalaman terhayati itu pun eksis di lingkungan besar kaum Reformasi, seperti: kaum Lutheran, kaum Calvinis, kaum Anglikan, dan orang-orang Anabaptis (baik yang radikal maupun yang moderat). Sekalipun demikian, secara spesifik, di lingkungan Calvinis pengalaman-terhayati macam itu eksis dengan nama spiritualitas Reform. Dalam disertasi ini, usaha penelitian diarahkan untuk mencermati kaum Calvinis di Negeri Belanda yang disebut dengan nama *de Gereformeerde Kerk* (artinya Gereja Reformasi). Dalam konteks inilah maka diskusi tentang spiritualitas Reform menjadi bersifat spesifik, yaitu: bahwa pengalaman-terhayati itu adalah wujud dari iman Reformasi yang diaktualisasikan secara hidup baik di tataran personal maupun sosial, khususnya dalam jajaran peristiwa yang pada akhirnya membentuk sejarah Kekristenan di Negeri Belanda sebelum pada akhirnya dibawa ke Tanah Jawa.

Langkah kedua dikerjakan dalam Bab Dua. Di sini spiritualitas Reform dilukiskan sebagai empat tema teologis yang terkait satu sama lain, yaitu: eklesiologi, sakramentologi, teologi pelayanan, dan paham kesalehan. Keempat tema teologis itu merepresentasikan suatu diskursus teologis tentang cara Allah dialami di dunia nyata, tentang pengalaman akan yang transedens di tengah realitas yang terpecah, tentang usaha manusia untuk mewadahi pelayanan yang sifatnya ilahi, dan tentang usaha manusia untuk mengolah diri pribadi demi Allah dan sesamanya. Disertasi ini dikerjakan dengan hipotesis bahwa spiritualitas Reform adalah wujud pengalaman-terhayati yang dibicarakan dalam keempat bidang teologis tersebut di atas. Spiritualitas Reform adalah tentang bagaimana orang mengalami gereja—baik yang universal maupun partikular, tentang bagaimana orang bersentuhan secara fisik—tetapi melalui iman—dengan yang ilahi melalui pelayanan sakramen yang dikerjakan oleh tatanan ministerial yang sah, dan tentang pengalaman akan Allah yang dibangkitkan oleh praktik kesalehan yang otentik.

Langkah ketiga dikerjakan dalam Bab Tiga. Di sini spiritualitas Reform dilukiskan sebagai aspek batiniah yang melatar-belakangi usaha penginjilan di Jawa. Spiritualitas ini menggerakkan motivasi orang-orang yang terlibat dalam usaha penginjilan tersebut, baik di kalangan orang-orang Eropa maupun Jawa. Namun hal itu bukannya tanpa masalah. Di kalangan orang-orang Eropa, spiritualitas Reform adalah hal yang dianggap berakar pada abad keenam-belas, yang diwarnai tentang perjuangan kaum beriman untuk membela kebebasan hati nuraninya melalui konfesi iman di medan publik. Sementara itu, di kalangan orang-orang Jawa, spiritualitas macam itu juga dirasakan tetapi tidak dengan menyebut-nyebut istilah Reform. Bagi orang-orang Jawa Kristen, yang harus berhadapan dengan pejabat-pejabat gereja maupun badan zending Belanda yang merasa lebih tinggi derajat sosialnya dari mereka, iman sebagai pengalaman-terhayati itu muncul dalam wujud usaha untuk mengungkapkan otentisitas Kekristenan mereka dengan cara-cara kultural setempat yang tidak lebih rendah posisinya daripada tradisi dan budaya Kekristenan Belanda. Pertikaian itu nyaris tak pernah berakhir, sampai meletusnya Perang Dunia Kedua yang membuahkan kemerdekaan bagi republik Indonesia maupun gereja-gereja Jawa yang kemudian disebut sebagai GKJ.

Langkah keempat dikerjakan di dalam Bab Empat. Di sini, spiritualitas Reform dinaratifkan sebagai fenomena GKJ yang berkembang setelah kemerdekaan Republik Indonesia. Pada waktu itu, GKJ melewati paling tidak tiga fase, yaitu: tahap ketika ia masih baru saja lepas dari Zending Belanda, tahap ketika ia ada di bawah bayang-bayang rezim Sukarno, dan tahap ketika ia ada di bawah bayang-bayang rezim Soeharto. Pada setiap tahapan tersebut fenomena GKJ dapat dinaratifkan sebagai usaha orang-orang beriman Kristiani untuk bergerak perlahan-lahan dari fase dependen ke independen. Setelah berhasil mencapai independensi, semangat kenabian pun muncul sebagaimana terlukis dalam lahirnya PPAG (Pokok-pokok Ajaran Gereja), yang diperlakukan sebagai pengakuan iman GKJ. Orang yang melatar-belakangi lahirnya dokumen ini adalah Pendeta Brotosemedi Wirjotenojo. Di dalam dirinya, terungkaplah bagaimana religiositas Jawa, spiritualitas Kristiani, dan tradisi Reform berasimilasi menjadi satu.

Akhirnya, sebagai konklusi, dapatlah dikatakan di sini bahwa spiritualitas adalah iman yang termanifestasikan di dalam pengalaman-terhayati. Oleh karena itu, spiritualitas itu bercorak historis, sebagaimana terlukis di dalam paparan disertasi ini tentang spiritualitas Reform yang tumbuh dan berkembang dengan cara melintasi banyak ruang lingkup politik dan kebudayaan. Spiritualitas Reform itu muncul di Eropa pada abad keenam-belas, namun kemudian juga bisa tumbuh dan berkembang di Jawa pada abad kedua-puluh. Melalui spiritualitas macam itu, proses asimilasi dan inkulturasi menjadi medan teologis yang tidak henti-hentinya

menyatakan tentang kehadiran Allah di tengah-tengah umat manusia. Situasi ini menyatakan bahwa tugas kontekstualisasi teologi akan selalu menantang setiap praksis hidup beriman di mana-mana, termasuk di kalangan orang-orang Jawa di Indonesia.

Samenvatting

Toen Calvijn in 1536 de eerste uitgave van zijn *Institutio* schreef, voegde hij er een sub-titel aan toe om zijn voornaamste bedoeling met dit werk duidelijk te maken; zijn boek was niet alleen bedoeld als een academische uiteenzetting, maar wilde ook een krachtige verdediging zijn van het geloof van de christenen, die in die tijd veel te lijden hadden van onderdrukking. Daarom nam hij een ondertitel op die aangaf dat dit werk was bedoeld als een ‘vijwel volledige samenvatting van de vroomheid [*pietas*]’ (Calvijn, 1536). Dit bewijst, dat Calvijns werk niet slechts een reeks theologische statements is, maar een narratief proces aangaande datgene, wat we nu als ‘spiritualiteit’ bestempelen. Dat wil niet zeggen, dat Calvijns werk een leidraad is voor geestelijke oefeningen of een boek met voorschriften over wat iets tot een spirituele traditie maakt. Wel kan de *Institutie* beschouwd worden als een theologisch ontwerp van grote betekenis, dat de grondslag is geworden van verschillende vormen van spiritualiteit, die uiteindelijk allemaal claimen een Calvinse spiritualiteit of Calvinistische spiritualiteit te zijn.

Deze dissertatie heeft de bedoeling zulke vormen van spiritualiteit te bestuderen. Omdat de theologie van Calvijn gewoonlijk wordt aangeduid als reformatorische theologie, kan het type spiritualiteit, dat het Calvinisme als kenmerk heeft, ook aangeduid worden als reformatorische spiritualiteit. Dit proefschrift is een studie over de reformatorische spiritualiteit die ontstond op Midden-Java, Indonesië, binnen een kerkelijke denominatie die GKJ (*Gereja-Gereja Kristen Jawa*) wordt genoemd. Het resultaat van dit onderzoek geschiedt in vier stappen. Allereerst poogt deze dissertatie de kern van de reformatorische spiritualiteit te definiëren. Vervolgens wordt geprobeerd de grote thema’s van deze reformatorische spiritualiteit te schetsen. Ten derde wil deze studie de ontwikkeling van deze reformatorische spiritualiteit gedurende de negentiende eeuw op Java beschrijven. Dat was de tijd waarin de evangelieverkondiging aan Javanen in Midden-Java ter hand werd genomen, wat uiteindelijk de historische achtergrond werd van het ontstaan van de GKJ. Tenslotte wil dit proefschrift het karakter evalueren van de reformatorische spiritualiteit van de huidige GKJ door aandacht te schenken aan het streven van deze denominatie om een eigen geloofsbelijdenis te formuleren, die bekend is geworden als PPAG (*Pokok-pokok ajaran Gereja*).

De eerste stap vindt plaats in Hoofdstuk I. Hier wordt reformatorische spiritualiteit gedefinieerd als—zoals genoemd door Sandra Schneiders (1989, 679) – geloof dat ‘geleefde ervaring’ wordt, geloof dat elke dag geleefd/beleefd wordt. We laten hier zien hoe spiritualiteit in deze zin ‘geleefde ervaring’ werd voor de mensen ten tijde van de Reformatie. Wel moet erkend worden, dat zo’n geleefde ervaring in principe bestond in brede kringen van de Reformatie, dus bij Lutheranen, Calvinisten, Anabaptisten (zowel de radicalen onder hen als de gematigden) en Anglicanen. Niettemin kreeg deze vorm van geleefde ervaring een eigen kleur in Calvinistische kringen onder de naam reformatorische spiritualiteit. In onze studie richt het onderzoek zich specifiek op die Calvinisten in Nederland, die behoorden tot de *Gereformeerde/Hervormde Kerk*. De discussie over reformatorische spiritualiteit krijgt zo dus een specifiek karakter, namelijk: de geleefde ervaring als het wezen van het reformatorische geloof zowel in het persoonlijke als ook in het sociale domein, met name in die reeks gebeurtenissen, die uiteindelijk de geschiedenis van het Christendom in Nederland vorm gaven voordat het naar Java kwam.

De tweede stap geschiedt in Hoofdstuk II. Hier wordt de reformatorische spiritualiteit geschetst als de samenhang van vier met elkaar verbonden theologische thema's, te weten ecclesiologie, sacramentologie, diakonaat en vroomheid. Deze vier thema's vertegenwoordigen een theologisch discours aangaande de wijze, waarop God wordt beleefd in de wereld; de ervaring van transcendentie in een gebroken werkelijkheid; het streven van de mens om kaders te vormen voor een dienst van Godswege; en de pogingen van de mens om zich als persoon te wijden aan God en de naaste. Deze dissertatie gaat uit van de hypothese, dat de reformatorische spiritualiteit het wezen van de beleefde ervaring vormt, waarover het in de genoemde thema's handelt. Het gaat in de reformatorische spiritualiteit over de vraag, hoe mensen de kerk ervaren—zowel de universele kerk als de plaatselijke –, hoe men fysiek, maar door middel van het geloof, in aanraking komt met het goddelijke via de dienst van de sacramenten, uitgevoerd door ambtelijk erkende bedienaren, en hoe God ervaren wordt via het ontwikkelen van een authentieke vroomheidspraxis.

De derde stap vinden we in Hoofdstuk III. Hier wordt de reformatotische spiritualiteit beschreven als het innerlijk aspect van de evangelisatie van Java. Deze spiritualiteit activeerde de motivatie van hen, die bij deze evangelisatie betrokken waren, zowel Europeanen als Javanen. Voor de Europeanen had de reformatorische spiritualiteit zijn wortels in de zestiende eeuw en was ze gekleurd door de strijd van de gelovigen om de vrijheid van geweten in het publieke domein te verdedigen via een geloofsbelijdenis. De Javanen ervoeren die spiritualiteit ook wel, maar gebruikten er een andere terminologie voor. De Javaanse christenen hadden zowel te maken met de eigen, vaak nog Nederlandse kerkelijke functionarissen als ook met de zendingsinstanties in Nederland. Tussen hen bestond vaak een sociale kloof. Uiteindelijk ontstond op Java een gereformeerde spiritualiteit als geleefde ervaring in een vorm die hun authenticiteit als christenen uitdrukte op lokale culturele wijze, die men zeker niet zag als van een lager niveau dan de traditie en cultuur van christelijk Nederland. Dat hier spanningen rezen zal duidelijk zijn. Deze controverse was nauwelijks beëindigd toen de Tweede Wereldoorlog uitbarstte, die resulteerde in de onafhankelijkheid van de Republiek Indonesië en van de Javaanse kerk, die vervolgens GKJ genoemd zou worden.

In Hoofdstuk IV zetten we een vierde stap. Hier wordt de reformatorische spiritualiteit beschreven als een fenomeen van de GKJ na de onafhankelijkheid van de Republiek Indonesië. In dit tijdperk maakte de GKJ drie fases door: allereerst de fase vlak na de losmaking van de Nederlandse zending; vervolgens een fase in de schaduw van het bewind van president Sukarno en tenslotte een fase tijdens het regime van president Soeharto. In elk van deze fases kan de spiritualiteit van de GKJ worden beschreven alseen poging van gelovige christenen om stap voor stap voort te gaan op de weg van afhankelijkheid naar onafhankelijkheid. Nadat men die onafhankelijkheid had verworven, ontstond een profetische geestdrift, die gestalte kreeg in het ontstaan van de zogenaamde PPAG (*Pokok-pokok Ajaran Gereja*, 'Hoofdzaken van de leer van de kerk'), die beschouwd wordt als de geloofsbelijdenis van de GKJ. De initiator van dit document was ds. Brotosemedi Wirjotoenojo. In zijn persoon wordt tot uitdrukking gebracht, hoe Javaanse religiositeit, christelijke spiritualiteit en reformatorische traditie tot één geheel kunnen versmelten.

Tenslotte kan, bij wijze van conclusie, gezegd worden dat spiritualiteit inderdaad geloof is dat zich manifesteert in doorleefde ervaring. Daarom heeft spiritualiteit een door de geschiedenis gekleurd patroon, zoals uiteen wordt gezet in deze dissertatie over reformatorische spiritualiteit, die ook het gebied van de politiek en de cultuur raakt. Deze reformatorische spiritualiteit ontstond in het Europa van de zestiende eeuw, maar kon vervolgens in de twintigste eeuw ook wortel schieten en zich ontwikkelen op Java. Via deze spiritualiteit werd

het process van assimilatie en inculturatie een theologisch aandachtsveld, dat voortdurend verhaalt van de aanwezigheid van God temidden van de gemeenschap van mensen. Deze situatie maakt duidelijk, dat de taak van contextualisatie van de theologie altijd een uitdaging zal vormen voor elke gelovige levenspraxis, waar dan ook, inclusief die van Javanen in Indonesië.

Curriculum Vitae

Simon Rachmadi was born on August 1, 1967, from a Javanese couple Endarsono Martodarsono and Kus Sumardani. His father is the grandson of Ngirad Asah, one of the assistants of missionary Esser working in the beginning of the twentieth-century in Central Java. His mother is the daughter of Soenoesmo, a Javanese physician working in the Dr. Scheurer Missionary Hospital in Klaten. This background has endowed him with a particular sense of Reformed-Javanese Christianity, which on the one hand is yearning for a modern authenticity but on the other hand is always searching for its historical roots in the history of Christianity.

He is married to Nugrahani Budhi Setyowati, and they are granted by God with two daughters by the name of Freya Murti Pramudita and Sakramenta Murti Paramastuti. His wife is a Javanese woman from Solo, or Surakarta, which is the heartland of Javanese culture. From her side, he is blessed with a refined Javanese *emic* (cultural emotion), which teaches him about the heart of Javanese feeling confronted with the Christian message.

His theological training has been formed in several phases. He got a bachelor degree from the Faculty of Theology in Satya Wacana Christian University, in 1992. Subsequently, in 1999, he got a Magister of Humaniora from the Magisterial Program of Sanata Dharma [Catholic] University in Yogyakarta. In this program, he met with several Jesuits and other priestly candidates (*fraters*) who made him interested in the Catholic tradition, especially the Ignatian spirituality. Likewise, in 2003, he got a Master of Arts from the IRTI Program of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. After that, in 2004, he joined the Faculty Development Program of the STT Jakarta (i.e. the Jakarta Theological Seminary), so that since 2011 he has been recruited as an educational staff in the seminary.

He is an ordained minister of the GKJ, firstly in GKJ Dagen-Palur Surakarta (2000), and then in GKJ Nehemia Jakarta (2012). His theological concern is focused upon the study of Christian spirituality which is designed both as an academic discourse and as a ministerial formation.

